



Right wing behind the coup attempt
 >>Pages 4&5

VENEZUELA

Tougher laws embolden racists in series of attacks
 >>Pages 7 and 17

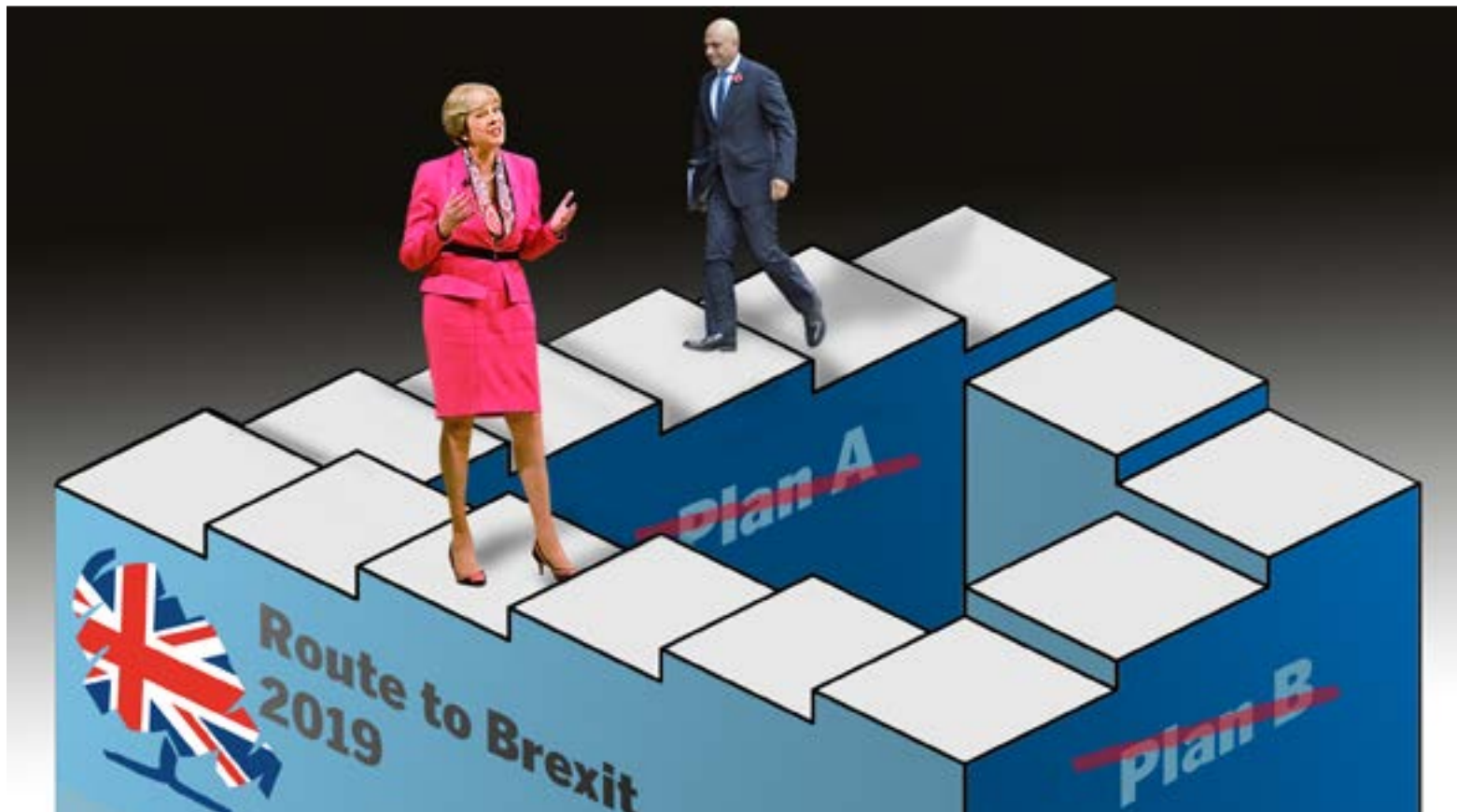
**Stand up to Tories' new
 immigration clampdown**



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TORIES ARE GOING NOWHERE



TIME TO RESIST!

STRIKE

Los Angeles teachers—a lesson in fighting

SCHOOL STRIKERS in Los Angeles are in the vanguard of a wave of walkouts at the heart of resistance to US president Donald Trump.

Around 33,000 teachers in Los Angeles staged a two-week walkout.

They have won gains over pay and other issues as a result.

>>Pages 10&11

THEORY



Karl Marx can spark joy for you

ORGANISATION expert Marie Kondo is asking millions of people if their possessions “spark joy” for them.

It's part of her “KonMari” method as featured in her hit Netflix series Tidying Up.

But what does the popularity of the programme show about the kind of world we live in and how we see commodities?

>>Pages 14&15

FURTHER EDUCATION

Pay strikes hit further education colleges

WORKERS AT further education colleges struck for two days to demand a 5 percent pay rise.

UCU members at 12 colleges struck on Tuesday, with a 13th college—Kendal—joining the strike on Wednesday.

>>Page 20



THE THINGS THEY SAY

'I was brought up to respect women. You looked after them and were polite to them and everything else'

Tory donor and hotel owner Sir Rocco Forte

'I am pretty queasy that Putin is so in favour of Brexit—I think that should give us all pause'

Lady Manningham-Buller, the former head of MI5, joins the Brexit debate

'Get out of my way you fucking peasant and watch my dogs!'

Queen's gamekeeper at Sandringham before attacking a motorist with a stick

'The people of Venezuela do not need the weasel words in a letter to the Guardian from assorted Stalinists, Trotskyists, antisemites, dead people, and Labour's frontbench'

Labour MP Mike Gapes welcomes the moves towards a coup in Venezuela



Boris Johnson pays for flight but Mr Burns goes for free

BORIS JOHNSON was happy to take a £14,000 gift in travel and hospitality from the Saudi Arabian government last autumn, which he declared in his financial interests.

But the posh Tory was much more reticent about accepting a freebie from the respectable Tory donor Christopher Moran.

Moran had organised for Johnson to talk about Brexit at the annual conference of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) bigots in Belfast.

Indeed, Johnson had opened his speech with a warm thanks to his "friend" Moran for securing the invitation.

Johnson had been flown back from the conference on Moran's private jet.

Also on the flight were Arlene Foster, the DUP leader, and Conor Burns, a Tory MP who used to be a parliamentary aide to Johnson. Burns declared a "donation in kind" worth £1,308. But Johnson says he paid for the return flight with Moran personally so didn't have to declare it.

Johnson said he had paid £2,600 to Moran to cover the cost of the flight. It is unclear why he felt compelled to pay his "friend" Moran for the flight.

Coincidentally, the trip took place in November, the day before newspapers revealed that Moran owns a luxury apartment block in West London where he charges £8 million a year in revenue from rents and service charges.

More than 100 women working as prostitutes advertise from the Chelsea Cloisters apartment block.

Johnson has been content to receive gifts from other major Tory donors since he stood down as foreign secretary in the summer.

He was given £73,000 for office costs by the hedge fund manager Jon Wood and a company run by the Tory election strategist Lynton Crosby. He also trousered £10,000 from Anthony Bamford, JCB's boss.

He accepted a £16,000 trip to Washington from an American policy institute, as well as his

visit to Saudi Arabia.

● AMONG THE defeated candidates in the recent hereditary peers' by-election were the Earl of Leicester whose seat is in Norfolk, the Earl of Carnarvon who lives in Hampshire, and Lord Southampton whose ancestral seat is in Northamptonshire. Elsewhere, the Duke of Devonshire's pile is in Derbyshire and the Duke of Somerset's in Wiltshire. Can't the upper classes read a map?

Leicester in Norfolk

● THE government's planned cuts to the tax on profits will mean billions more in lost revenue than previously thought. The tax rate on company profits is to be cut from its current low level of 19 percent to 17 percent by the end next year. That will cost more than £6 billion.

MPs committee slams the academies scams

ACADEMIES are damaging children's education while allowing bosses to cream off huge amounts of money, according to a parliamentary report.

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) said "a succession of high-profile academy failures have been costly and damaging to children's education".

But wrecking schools is paying off for the bosses. Former head of south London's Durand Academy Sir Greg Martin received a payout of £850,000—what the PAC called a "shocking reward for failure".

Despite a "catastrophic failure of governance" Durand Educational Trust had a "considerable liability" to Martin. This is

because Martin owned the firm contracted to manage accommodation and leisure facilities on the school site. The PAC heard that the lump sum was "potentially worth £1.8 million" but was cut to £850,000 following an inquiry.

And academies continue to pay bosses huge salaries.

A longer version of this article is at bit.ly/2B6DWxa

Drug cops force spitting out of Mini Cheddars

POLICE swooped on a woman munching Mini Cheddars.

Katherine Oliver was eating the snack as four officers leaped out of two unmarked vehicles which roared up and blocked her car as she pulled on to her drive. She said, "One screamed, 'What's in your mouth?' I struggled to say 'Mini Cheddars' through the large mouthful."

"He said 'Open your mouth', grabbed my face and squeezed. He asked 'Is that a bag of brown?'"

and I said 'No'.

"I had to spit the cheddars into my palm to show him. I was ordered out and they screamed that I'd come from a drug house. I said, 'No, I've come from Tesco'."

● A detective chief inspector has been jailed for plotting to set up two men. Elizabeth Belton of West Yorkshire police sent texts to PC Judith Mulligan. One said, "You've fit him up lol." Two men were jailed as a result of the cops' action in 2013.



Universal credit rip off

HUNDREDS OF thousands of Universal Credit claimants will lose out on a week's rent next year thanks to a glitch, housing associations have warned.

Tenants who pay rent once a week will make an extra payment in 2019/20 because the financial year has 53 Mondays, not 52.

The National Housing Federation's Catherine Ryder said, "It's a serious situation. This whole mess is entirely avoidable. Ministers must act now..."

The DWP said there are "no plans" to make changes.



We will pay for oil profits

WE COULD have to stump up at least £24 billion to safely dismantle oil and gas rigs and other infrastructure in the North Sea, parliament's spending watchdog warned.

There are around 320 fixed installations such as platforms and pipelines that will need to be decommissioned.

Energy companies are able to claim tax reliefs—by deducting costs from their profits or claiming back duties previously paid—to help with the expense of plugging and abandoning wells and removing equipment.

The cost to the Treasury of these tax reliefs has been estimated by the government at £24 billion, but the National Audit Office warned the final bill could be higher.

The Oil & Gas Authority, the regulator for the North Sea, has estimated oil and gas producers will have to spend up to £77 billion on decommissioning.

In 2016-17, the government paid out more to producers—£290 million in tax repayments—than it received in revenues.

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May makes a dog's dinner out of her own Brexit deal

THERESA MAY manoeuvred between tragedy and farce as she faced another humiliating day in parliament over Brexit.

In another public climbdown, May opened the debate on Tuesday by telling MPs to back an amendment that tears up her own Brexit deal.

She had hoped to get right wing backbenchers on side by supporting Sir Ian Brady's amendment which called for "alternative arrangements" over Northern Ireland. She was calling for votes against a deal she negotiated and had insisted was not amendable in important ways.

May had hoped to unite her party and bolster her position against the EU's rulers. But her desperate move didn't persuade all hardline Brexiteer or Remain-supporting Tory MPs—and the EU said it wouldn't reopen negotiations.

A big sticking point remains the proposed "backstop" over Britain and the European Union's (EU) border in Northern Ireland.

The British state and the Irish government wanted to avoid a hard border with physical barriers and customs checks.

The EU has insisted on a border between member and non-member states unless they have agreed trading arrangements.

This isn't an imminent problem as long as there isn't a no-deal Brexit. Britain would remain in the EU's single market and customs union during a two-year "transition period" after the official leave date on 29 March.

But the "backstop" would kick in if Britain and the EU didn't reach an agreement on their future relationship after the two years were up.

It would see Northern Ireland remain in the single market and customs union after the transition period ends. And this means that there would be customs checks between Britain and Northern Ireland. With

WE NEED to hound the Tories out

the Brexit deadline approaching, May was forced to back the plan last December.

But it went too far for Tory backbenchers and the bigots of the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) whose MPs prop up May's government.

This almost guaranteed defeat for May's Brexit plan in parliament and has produced deadlock.

A Tory minister hastily cobbled together a plan on Tuesday. Dubbed the "Malthouse Plan", it proposed a free trade area instead of the backstop. But it won't succeed—because the EU has already ruled it out.

The EU is a capitalist regional bloc that competes with rivals on the world market. Its rulers want to control what goods and services come into their territory in order to protect their own profits.

While they want free movement for capital and labour inside the EU, they are determined to safeguard its external border at all costs.

The real solution is for Britain to leave Ireland.

And the people of Ireland should have the right to a referendum across the whole island on Irish unification.

May has now promised MPs a "meaningful vote" on the Brexit deal on 14 February.

There will be no love lost between the deeply divided Tories on that day either. But the Labour Party is paralysed and the trade union leaders aren't taking advantage of the Tory crisis by calling strikes or protests.

This has left working class people feeling frustrated and as spectators.

The best way to break the deadlock is to step up resistance on the streets, workplaces and campuses to drive out May and all the Tories.

On other pages...

What will Tory Brexit mean for EU migrants? >>Page 17

Migrants lose with Tory no-deal

HOME SECRETARY Sajid Javid said the Tories would immediately end freedom of movement "once and for all" if there was a no-deal Brexit.

The Tories would use a no-deal Brexit to strengthen Britain's racist immigration controls. Javid boasted that this would give Britain "full control" of its borders.

Currently freedom of movement would continue for a two-year "transition period" after Britain formally leaves the EU on 29 March.

Migrants who came after the leave date would be forced to jump through bureaucratic hoops and wait five years to gain the same rights as British citizens.

The three million EU migrants already living in Britain would have to apply to keep their rights under the EU Settlement Scheme.

This process would not change under Javid's plans for a no-deal Brexit.

But any migrants who came after 29 March for longer than three months would have to apply for a new immigration status, known as "European



Sajid Javid

Temporary Leave to Remain".

They would be forced to pay, go through identity and security checks, then risk getting thrown out after three years.

Those who don't qualify under the Tories' proposed "skills-based" immigration rules would have to leave.

Javid is jostling for position as a potential future leader of the Tory party. He wants to prove to Tory backbenchers and the membership that he can be trusted to push vicious scapegoating of migrants.

And the Tory party as a whole hopes to unite around racist scapegoating and chase right wing voters.

Javid's announcement underlines that what's happening to migrants is down to Tory policy, not an inevitable consequence of leaving the EU.

The left should oppose the competing Tory visions of Brexit—and put forward an anti-racist vision that defends workers' and migrants' rights.

Will Trump herald return?

US PRESIDENT Donald Trump could be planning another visit to Britain.

The Sunday Times newspaper reported that Trump might come for the 75th anniversary of D-Day on 6 June.

He will use the anniversary of the Allied invasion of France during the Second World War to posture about US imperial might in the world.

Trump must be opposed.

A carnival of resistance met Trump when he came to Britain last July. Around 250,000 poured

onto the streets of London—and thousands more joined protests in towns and cities across Britain.

Workers, students, anti-racists, women's groups, black, white, Muslim and LGBT+ people were all out together.

Protesters hounded Trump on the stops of his visit—from Scotland to Blenheim Palace in Oxfordshire.

People must fill the streets again if Trump dares to come in June.

Mass protests against Trump will boost people everywhere fighting back against the right and racism.



PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Protesting last year

Breakfast in



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Venezuelan president faces coup backed by the right

by ALISTAIR FARROW

VENEZUELA IS on the brink of a right wing coup sponsored by the US.

The country's president Nicolas Maduro has been challenged by the opposition leader Juan Guaido, who named himself "interim president" during a rally last Wednesday.

Guaido has called for protests this weekend in an effort to undermine Maduro's position. He demanded that Maduro call new elections within eight days of last Saturday—but Maduro refused.

The US and other Western powers have given Guaido firm backing.

"Either you stand with the forces of freedom, or you're in league with Maduro and his mayhem," US secretary of state Mike Pompeo told the United Nations last Saturday. Canada, Israel, Britain and others have come in behind the US.

British foreign secretary Jeremy Hunt has described a potential Guaido presidency as "a new start for the suffering of Venezuela". Theresa May has backed him too. A Downing Street spokesperson said, "We fully support the democratically-elected national assembly, with Juan Guaido as its president."

Britain, Germany, France and Spain have all backed Guaido's calls for new elections.

Imperialist

Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn's spokesperson said Maduro was "still president. We don't want any interference." Labour should condemn any imperialist intervention. Guaido's Popular Will is Labour's sister party. But its democratic image is thin at best.

A taste of Guaido's political principles came after the election of far right Brazilian president Jair Bolsonaro in October last year.

Guaido congratulated Bolsonaro's "commitment to and for democracy [and] human rights". Bolsonaro has purged left wing civil servants and has launched attacks on workers.

And Guaido has sought the support of the most reactionary figures

BACK STORY

Venezuela has had a left wing government since Hugo Chavez became president in 1999

●Chavez enjoyed mass support from workers and the poor. And his manifesto was anti-imperialist

●Right wing forces tried to overthrow him in 2002. But he was saved by mass mobilisation of ordinary people

●But Chavez also made compromises with the right

●Now his successor, Nicolas Maduro, could face a coup

in the region. According to an Associated Press report, "In mid-December, Guaido quietly travelled to Washington, Colombia and Brazil to brief officials on the opposition's strategy of mass demonstrations."

The report quoted a US source who claimed that "moderate factions" within Venezuela were marginalised in planning the demonstrations against Maduro.

The role of the Venezuelan army is critical. So far it has continued to back Maduro, largely because he has enriched senior military figures enormously. But there are signs that its support could waver.

Guaido has attempted to win over layers of the armed forces and the state.

Last week he announced an amnesty for soldiers who came over to his side. He has also been photographed entering the same building as Diosdado Cabello, leader of Maduro's PSUV party

The US has not been able to sweep a weakened Maduro aside is an indication of the limits of its own power. Russia and China have given strong backing to Maduro, forcing the US to couch its attempts at engineering a coup in terms of "democracy".

In the last century, although there might have been rhetoric about "freedom" a more direct and bloody approach would have been more likely.

Bloodthirsty US national security adviser John Bolton was limited to warning of retaliation if US diplomats were threatened with violence or intimidation.

Maduro has demanded they leave the country, but the US

JUAN GUAIDO declares himself president of Venezuela

The US wants to force out Maduro but its success is not guaranteed

THE BID to get rid of Maduro was not initially as successful as the coup-plotters hoped.

Imperial powers are vying for control of a decisive country in Latin America—and control of its vast oil resources, the largest in the world.

Three quarters of Venezuelan oil exports go to the US.

That the US has not been able to sweep a weakened Maduro aside is an indication of the limits of its own power.

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Maduro has demanded they leave the country, but the US

Maduro resisted attempts to topple him

has refused. Establishment newspapers the New York Times and Washington Post have both warned against direct military intervention.

A mobilisation of the working class and the poor would be decisive in the fight against the right wing coup.

Such mobilisations defended former president Hugo Chavez

in 2002 when a US-backed coup threatened to topple him.

But this is harder now because of Maduro's attacks on the poor.

There is a deep anger at these attacks. But this does not automatically transfer to support for the right.

According to a report by the Venezuelan Observatory of Social Conflict, 89 percent of the 12,715 anti-government demonstrations in 2018 "occurred based on demands for economic rights".

The working class and the poor must come out to defend against the threat of a coup, and push for a better kind of society.

Ordinary people must protest and strike to make their voices heard, and to go beyond what Maduro offers.

Without this the fate of Venezuela will be decided between competing imperial powers.

On other pages...

Los Angeles teachers' strike—a lesson in how to fight >>Pages 10&11

Is Venezuela an example of a socialist society?

FOR YEARS people across the world have looked to Venezuela as an example.

For the right, it's an example of how socialism results in tyranny and chaos. Yet the right's cheerleaders at the heart of the US state bear much of the responsibility for the chaos in Venezuela.

A United Nations rapporteur who visited the country in September of last year said US economic sanctions could amount to "crimes against humanity".

For many on the left Venezuela was an example of how social progress can be delivered by controlling the state.

But for revolutionary

socialists it was the huge mobilisations of ordinary people in defence of Hugo Chavez in 2002 that gave a flavour of how to change the world.

One argument from people such as Labour's

shadow chancellor John McDonnell is that Chavez's government was a socialist project that Maduro broke from. But Chavez left much of the wealth and power of the rich intact. He even privatised key state industries.

Chavez's policies would not have guarded against the economic crisis gripping Venezuela. And the economic crisis is not only down to US sanctions, as Maduro likes to claim.

For over a decade he and his successor Maduro consistently sought to demobilise working class self-activity as part of their project of delivering socialism from above.

Yet working class organisation has not disappeared. On Tuesday last week teachers struck nationally to demand pay rises.

Strikes and protests will be the way to defeat the US and Juan Guaido.

El Salvador, Venezuela, Nicaragua—Elliott Abrams has had a hand in them all

The US diplomat who gives the nod to bloody coups

DONALD Trump has appointed Elliott Abrams to oversee the "transition to democracy" in Venezuela.

Abrams has been at the centre of the US foreign policy establishment for decades.

He has the deaths of thousands of people on his hands.

As Ronald Reagan's assistant secretary of state for human rights and humanitarian affairs he covered up some of the US's most

horrific crimes.

Some 500 people were massacred at El Mozote in El Salvador by the US-backed Salvadoran government in 1982.

Abrams later described US policy in the country as a "fabulous achievement".

He was one of those who "gave the nod" to the 2002 coup attempt in Venezuela to go ahead.

He has been convicted of withholding

information from Congress over the Iran-Contra affair, which saw money allocated to fund right wing death squads in Nicaragua.

He was central to the international effort to drum up cash for the Contra death squads.

Now Abrams is in charge of US policy in Venezuela.

With such a person at the wheel, there can be no doubt of the anti-democratic designs the US has on the country.

Socialist Worker
WHAT WE THINK

LABOUR'S SHAMEFUL BETRAYAL OF MIGRANTS

LABOUR HAD a chance to stop a major racist Tory attack on migrants this week. It failed.

MPs voted on the Immigration Bill on Monday.

This nasty piece of legislation would end freedom of movement, which allows European Union migrants to come to Britain without a visa.

The bill passed through its second reading with a majority of just 63 votes. That means it is now one step closer to becoming law.

If the 78 Labour MPs who were absent had bothered to turn up and vote against, it could have been stopped in its tracks.

Labour's behaviour in the hours running up to the vote was farcical.

Shadow home secretary Diane Abbott denounced the bill in an article for the Morning Star newspaper last Saturday.

Yet by Monday she said, "The Labour Party is clear that when Britain leaves the single market, freedom of movement ends.

"The front bench will not be opposing this bill."

After outrage on social media, Labour changed its position again. It said it would vote against the bill after all—but with only a "one line

whip". This instruction to Labour MPs essentially tells them they don't have to turn up to the vote if they don't want to.

The confusion comes from two big problems with how Labour thinks it should approach immigration.

The first is that too many Labour MPs think their voters are hostile to migrants.

That's a patronising idea of what working class people are like, and one with little evidence to back it up. But it's one that plenty of Labour MPs swallow.

The second problem is that most Labour MPs then think that the only way to deal with the racists views that do exist is

Labour MPs think that their voters are hostile to migrants despite little evidence

cuts to its day-to-day spending in 2017-18 compared to 2009-10. The council said it has axed four out of ten jobs as a result.

This is the price of councils going along with Tory cuts instead of fighting them.

It has meant axing children's centres, such as in south London, or trying to scrap adult social care services, as in Birmingham.

And none of this is to do with Brexit.

But it's not austerity for everyone. The Tories have put in

place policies to pile more money into the pockets of the rich. The tax rate on firms' profits is set to be cut to just 17 percent next year—saving the bosses more than £6 billion.

And the National Audit Office said last week that energy firms dismantling oil and gas rigs will grab at least £24 billion from the Tories in "tax relief".

We have to force out the brutal Tory austerity regime—and resist their cuts as long as they remain in office.

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ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS



Class was the key for Erik Olin Wright

THE MARXIST sociologist Erik Olin Wright died of leukaemia last week. He was 71 years old.

During his last months he wrote a lucid and stoical blog, calmly contemplating when “the stardust that is me will dissipate back to the more ordinary state of matter”.

Although we were both students at the same Oxford college at the end of the 1960s, I only got to know Erik much later. I particularly remember the conference on class organised by Kate Alexander at the University of Johannesburg in which we both participated in June 2009.

Class indeed was the main theme of Erik’s intellectual career, which he largely spent teaching sociology at the University of Madison-Wisconsin. He sought to marry Marx’s theory of classes to the empirical and quantitative methods of the mainstream social sciences. Usually Marx disappears in such attempts, but not so in Erik’s case.

He never lost sight of Marx’s central claim, that class is a social relationship based on the exploitation of one part of society by another. Particularly in three books—the brilliant *Class Structure and Income Distribution* (1979), *Classes* (1985), and *Class Counts* (1997), he produced work that combined great conceptual elegance and empirical rigour.

Perhaps his best-known innovation was the theory of contradictory class locations. Erik argued that in modern advanced capitalist societies a significant section of the workforce share some of the properties of capitalists and some of those of workers.

For example, managers and supervisors are wage-earning employees, but act on behalf of capital to ensure the exploitation of the mass of the workers. For Erik this was a sign that the class structure of capitalism was more complex than Marx had predicted and so the road to socialism would prove more difficult.

Whatever the political consequences one draws, to my mind the concept of contradictory class locations is a fruitful one. Unfortunately, Erik was influenced by debates among Marxist economists during the 1970s to abandon Marx’s labour theory of value. This had two negative effects.

First, Marx’s own analysis of capitalist exploitation is based on the labour theory of value. He argues that all new value is created by labour, but that capitalists appropriate some of it—surplus value—as profits.

Abandon

If you abandon this theory, you have to come up with a different explanation of exploitation. Erik took his from the economist John Roemer who argued, for example, that skilled workers exploit the less skilled.

This approach tended to reduce class to differences in income rather than positions in the relations of production—exactly the kind of mainstream treatment of class that Erik had started off rejecting. To his credit, he resisted this implication of Roemer’s theory through his career.

Secondly, the labour theory of value underlies Marx’s argument that capitalism is inherently liable to regular economic crises rooted in the tendency of the rate of profit to fall. Erik argued instead—in this case with Harry Brighouse, in a debate we had about my book *Equality*—that capitalism has “considerable flexibility and capacity to muddle through”.

We disagreed again at the Johannesburg conference, which took place at the height of the global recession precipitated by the crash of 2007-8. I thought Erik underestimated its significance.

He believed there was much more scope for reforming capitalism than revolutionary socialists such as I argued.

In his later years Erik’s main intellectual focus was on exploring possible reforms and strategies for achieving them. Envisioning *Real Utopias* (2009) was devoted to this.

Its complex arguments are summarised in an article in the *Jacobin* magazine called “How to be an Anticapitalist” (2015), where he appealed to socialists to “give up the fantasy of smashing capitalism” and concentrate on “taming and eroding capitalism”.

These texts, like all Erik’s work, were argued with great care and subtlety. He was clearly an exemplary, painstaking teacher, widely loved by his students. My sympathies go to them and above all to his family, and his friends. All socialists should mourn the passing of a very creative Marxist intellectual.

Problems were built into the hospital named ‘Death Star’

A death at a Glasgow hospital has shone a light on a scandal-hit institution, writes

Tomáš Tengely-Evans

CONDITIONS AT a Scottish hospital nicknamed the “Death Star” by locals have been blamed for the death of a ten year old cancer patient.

The boy died after contracting an infection linked to pigeon droppings at the Queen Elizabeth University “super hospital” in Glasgow last week.

A procurator fiscal—a coroner with legal powers—is deciding whether to launch an inquiry or prosecution.

And now a further patient at the hospital is seriously ill after contracting a fungal infection from mould.

The revelations are a fresh scandal for the Scottish National Party government.

Scottish health secretary Jeane Freeman was forced to call a full investigation into the design, building and maintenance of the hospital.

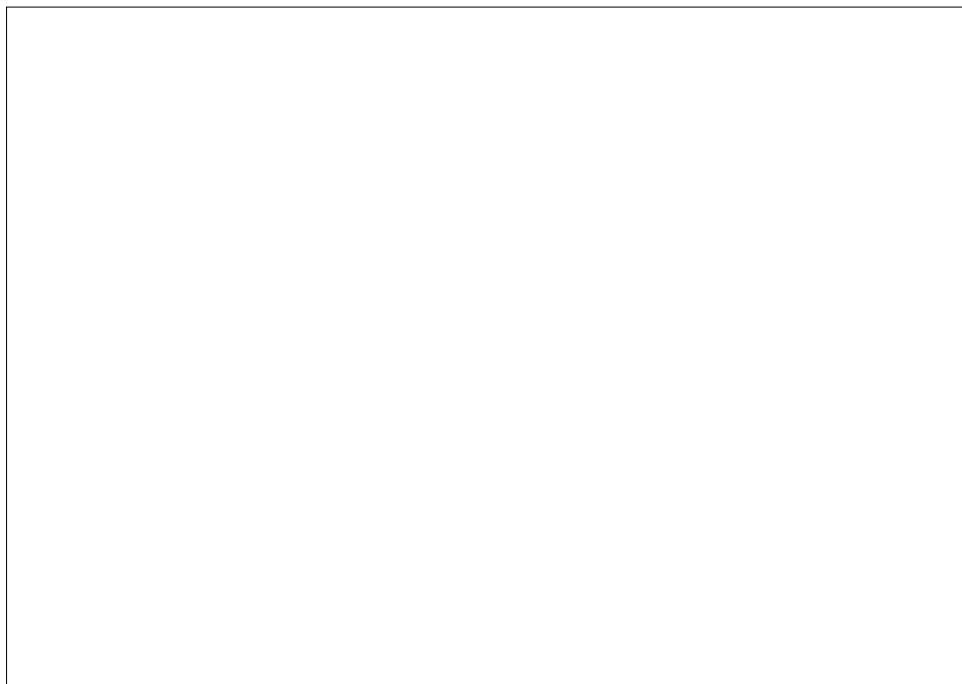
The hospital has been plagued by health and safety problems since opening in 2015.

Stripped

Cladding had to be stripped from the hospital because it was similar to the type used on Grenfell Tower.

And a source spoke out in the *Evening Times* newspaper about faulty fire doors.

They said all of the doors at the Queen Elizabeth, Europe’s largest hospital campus, had to be removed because they lacked fire retardant sealant.



THE QUEEN Elizabeth University Hospital (above) and Scottish health secretary Jeane Freeman (left)

be the flagship of the Scottish government’s plan to tackle huge health inequalities in the country.

The plans saw the merger of the Southern General, Victoria Infirmary and Yorkhill Children’s Hospital.

Yet simply amalgamating services into a “super-hospital” doesn’t make delivery more efficient.

And Scottish architect Malcolm Fraser pointed to some potential design flaws of the super-hospital building.

“If you look at buildings in a technical way instead of a holistic, healthy way, then you can overlook things,” he said.

“Part of the problem here is that mechanical

ventilation ducts have been a way to pick up pigeon diseases and push them around a building.

“Instead of opening a window to get air in, you move air in through intakes of big fans.

“And they put ducts around the building, pre-heat it and pre-cool it and feed it into individual rooms so you don’t have to open the window.

“It has this knock-on effect of spreading diseases around the building.”

Those responsible must be held to account.

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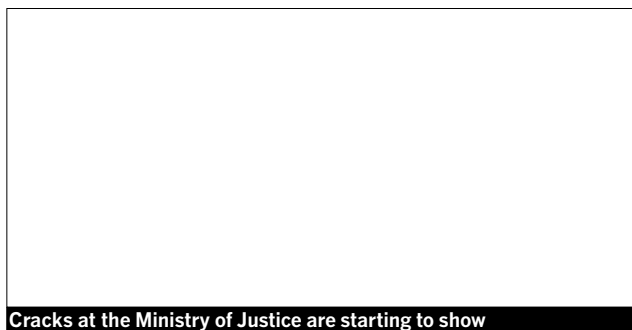
Tory cuts behind Ministry of Justice ‘meltdown’

THOUSANDS OF court cases were disrupted or delayed across England and Wales last week due to an IT meltdown at the Ministry of Justice (MOJ).

A crash of the court service’s main computer system meant uncertainty and worry for people waiting to appear in court as cases were delayed.

It also made it nearly impossible for people to contact the Crown Prosecution Service, with emails unanswered and phone lines reportedly down.

The crash exposed a



Cracks at the Ministry of Justice are starting to show

court service straining under the weight of years of cuts.

Data published on Monday showed that more than half of all

magistrates’ courts have closed since 2010.

The closures mean some people now have to travel distances of up to 50 miles to attend

court. And the situation seems set to get worse as the MOJ pushes ahead with plans to move more services from courts to large “contact centres”.

The PCS union has opposed the plan and is in dispute with the MOJ.

An MOJ source told *Socialist Worker* that those who oppose the cuts “are feeling vindicated” by the chaos that the IT crash has exposed.

“If you underfund and under resource a service long enough the cracks will start to show,” they said.

Tory immigration law cracks down on 'unskilled' migrants

The new bill will come into force after Brexit and whip up division between workers. We must fight to extend freedom of movement for all, and the right to move in search for a better life

THE TORIES are trying to push through a new law that could block the majority of European Union (EU) immigration after Brexit.

The Immigration and Social Security Coordination Bill would end freedom of movement after Britain leaves the EU.

Formally abolishing free movement is a stepping stone to new rules unveiled in the Tories' Immigration White Paper last December.

The new regulations will rest on a Tory law from the 1970s that aimed to clamp down on immigration from Britain's former colonies.

The Immigration Act 1971 gives the home secretary sweeping powers to determine what hoops migrants have to jump through to work and live in Britain.

The changes would be phased in from 2021, when the two-year "Brexit transition period" is scheduled to end.

The White Paper's proposals are based on a false division between "skilled" and "unskilled" migrants.

EU migrants classed as "skilled"—largely those with a university degree—would have to apply for a five-year work visa.

For migrants classed as "unskilled" the rules would be far harsher. They could only apply for a one-year work visa and would not be able to bring over family members or access public funds.

Indefinite

Labour MP Harriet Harman has led a cross party group of MPs supporting an amendment to the bill that would end indefinite detention for asylum seekers.

Britain is the only EU member state where refugees can be locked up indefinitely without charge.

Scrapping it has been a key demand of asylum seekers, who have frequently staged hunger strikes at Yar's Wood immigration detention centre.

Refugees suffer humiliating treatment under Britain's racist immigration rules.

It emerged last Sunday that the Home Office was using debit card purchases to track asylum seekers' whereabouts.

If any purchases are made outside of the person's "authorised city", the Home Office would use it to claim they didn't need emergency shelter.

While Harman's amendment would limit detention to 28 days, a judge could keep extending it for further 28-day periods.

Labour's approach to immigration doesn't carry the Tories' racist



ANTI-RACISTS OUTSIDE the fascist Freedom Party's ball in Vienna

PICTURE: LEFT TURN NOW/FACEBOOK

rhetoric, but accepts the division between "skilled" and "unskilled".

Splitting migrants into "skilled" and "unskilled" increases divisions among working class people and makes it harder to fight the Tories.

Labour's immigration policy shouldn't be based on what's best for big business—but what's best for workers.

Bosses can move vast amounts of money around the world in search of greater profits. Why shouldn't people have the right to move in search of a better life?

Anti-racists must fight to defend and extend freedom of movement.



On other pages...

What will a Tory Brexit mean for EU migrants? >>Page 17

Fascists try to have a go

ATTEMPTED ATTACKS by the far right have underlined the importance of building a mass movement against fascism.

A group of racists, led by James Goddard—best known for harassing Anna Soubry MP descended on a Manchester Stand Up To Racism (SUTR) stall last Saturday. They kicked over the stall and chanted in support of Nazi Tommy Robinson.

Goddard is jostling for a leading position on the British far right by organising "Yellow

Vest" protests. Manchester SUTR has organised a Reclaim the City solidarity event this Saturday. And nationally SUTR has called a counter-mobilisation against a planned "Yellow Vest" rally in central London, on 30 March.

Meanwhile, far right activist Vinnie Sullivan tried to cause trouble at Bookmarks the socialist bookshop in central London.

The events show the importance of building for the SUTR national demonstrations.

ROUND-UP

Oxford

AROUND 100 anti-fascists in Oxford protested against French Nazi Marion Marechal-Le Pen on Tuesday of last week.

Marechal-Le Pen, a leading member of the National Rally/ Front National, had been invited to speak by the Oxford Union university debating society.

Supporters of Stand Up To Racism (SUTR) were among the protesters outside.

Ian McKendrick from the Oxford SUTR group said, "We think it's wrong for the Oxford Union to give people a platform with fascist views."

The Oxford SUTR group also organised a week-long Holocaust Memorial exhibition, which saw 90 people come through the door on the first day.

Holocaust Memorial Day

SUTR AND Unite Against Fascism have been organising meetings around Holocaust Memorial Day.

Up to 90 people attended a joint meeting organised by the Islington and Hackney SUTR groups in north London last Saturday.

A similar number turned out for the Waltham Forest meeting.

Dozens of people turned out for a Holocaust Memorial Day outdoor event at Newcastle University.

It was organised by the local SUTR North East group.

Meanwhile, anti-racists in the area are also organising solidarity after a Muslim community centre was vandalised with far right graffiti.

Scotland

THE SUTR Scotland conference takes place this Saturday with speakers including Sandra White (SNP), Anas Sarwar (Labour), Khadija Mohammed (STUC) and many others.

Cardiff

ANTI-RACISTS RAN a tiny handful of far right "Yellow Vest" protesters out of town in Cardiff last Saturday. It followed a similarly successful action in neighbouring Newport last week.



IN BRIEF

Israeli settlers kill Palestinian

ISRAELI SETTLERS killed a Palestinian man during an attack on a Palestinian village in the West Bank last Saturday.

Hamdi Saadeh Naasan—a father of four—died after being shot in the back when Israeli settlers entered his village.

Armed Israelis from a nearby settlement outpost marched on Hamdi's village Al-Mughayyir and opened fire on Palestinians who came out to challenge them. They were joined by Israeli soldiers who also attacked the Palestinians.

The attack came after a reported confrontation between Palestinians and a settler near the village.

The Palestinian West Bank has been under Israeli occupation since 1967. Israeli settler activists camp on Palestinian land then frequently attack Palestinians in an effort to drive them out.

They are often protected by Israeli soldiers who establish checkpoints near settlement outposts, restricting Palestinians' freedom to move.

Trump retreats on shutdown

RACIST US president Donald Trump has temporarily backed down from his attempt to use a federal shutdown to force through £5 billion funding for his infamous border wall.

Democrats had refused to vote through a budget which contained the funding. Trump then refused to amend the budget, leading to the longest partial federal shutdown in US history—35 days.

Workers' resistance was a factor in the decision. Last week the Association of Flight Attendants raised the prospect of a general strike against the shutdown.

And air traffic controllers calling in sick on Friday of last week meant hundreds of flights were cancelled or delayed across the US's east coast.

Yet, despite Trump's climbdown, the wall could still go ahead. Trump has suggested that he could declare a state of emergency at the US-Mexico border to requisition funds from the military to pay for the wall.

BRAZIL



Dam collapse was predicted

Socialist Worker's article is available at bit.ly/Damcollapse

Mood of rebellion moves to French trade unions

by ZACK LEWIS-GRIFFITHS in Lyon and CHARLIE KIMBER

YELLOW VESTS and trade unionists could together deliver a crushing blow to France's president Emmanuel Macron.

The CGT union federation has been forced by pressure from below to call a general strike on Tuesday of next week.

Its demands are similar to several of those raised by the Yellow Vest movement—higher wages, a tax system that hits the rich rather than the poor, more money for public services and defence of the right to protest free from police aggression.

Other trade unionists beyond the CGT have backed the call. The SUD Rail branch at Paris Nord said, "Rail workers, are you ready? We have our accounts to settle with the government! Stop job cuts, raise wages, no to privatisation. On 5 February, we have to block everything, we need to build an unlimited general strike."

Allies

Such rank and file mobilisation will be needed to make the strike effective and to convince Yellow Vests that the unions can be their allies.

The Solidaires federation says 5 February must not be an isolated event but a launchpad for bigger Yellow Vest demonstrations and for a general strike that goes beyond a day.

If the power of organised workers is linked to the militancy and determination of the Yellow Vests then the movement can take a giant step forward. But it can't be left to the union leaders who have largely spurned the movement up to now.

Last Saturday's Act XI of the Yellow Vests again saw many large demonstrations and tens of thousands of people on the streets.

Macron's hope that his fake "Great Debate"—a series of highly-orchestrated and restricted "public" meetings—would end the revolt has failed. So repression has again come to the fore.

Jerome Rodrigues, a popular

THE MOVEMENT shows little sign of being intimidated by vicious state repression

figure in the Yellow Vests, was hit in the face by a rubber bullet or flashball on the demonstration in Paris. He is expected to lose the sight in his right eye.

Rodrigues was placed in an artificial coma overnight after the incident at the Bastille.

On Saturday in Lyon a rally in the city was declared to the authorities by the local Yellow Vests assembly.

But said student Soumia, "It didn't stop the police from using repression right from the beginning" on the march.

"A girl was shot in the foot by a flashball and there was a lot of tear gas," said Soumia.

"This time the crowd was more organised and fully fighting back, not letting themselves be divided by police strategy. They insult us, shoot tear gas and flashballs and charge us but we kept coming back."

Yellow Vests round-up

■ THE CONTINGENT of the revolutionary socialist NPA on the Yellow Vest march in Paris was attacked by "The Zouaves", a fascist group. Several NPA members were wounded. The NPA said, "The groups of Yellow Vests present during the assaults were also shocked by these attacks, and some intervened with us to repel the fachos."

■ THE FIRST Yellow Vest "assembly of the assemblies" met last weekend bringing together about 26 delegations from across the country.

It agreed a statement which included, "From the smallest village, from the rural world to the largest city, we have raised ourselves against this deeply violent, unjust and unbearable society. We won't let it go! We will fight against a life of precariousness and misery. Twenty six billionaires possessing as much as half of humanity is unacceptable."

"We demand the immediate increase in wages, social security, allowances and pensions, the unconditional right to housing and health, education, free public services for all."

■ "NUIT JAUNE" (Yellow Nights) protests have taken place in Paris, Toulouse, Lyon and some other cities with activists attempting to occupy city centres all night.

■ RIOT POLICE are being armed with new, more dangerous, assault rifles to put down the protests even more ruthlessly.

■ POLICE HAVE begun filming demonstrations across France as part of Macron's attempt to list and criminalise suspected leading members of the Yellow Vests.

■ A MARCH of up to 10,000 counter-protesters calling themselves Les Foulardes Rouge (The Red Scarves) had a march in Paris on Sunday to express annoyance at traffic blockades and problems for small businesses. They also claimed the Yellow Vests are a risk to democracy.

Several sarcastic comedians from the Yellow Vests infiltrated the march and waved mocking signs spouting love for Macron and riot guns—"Courage President" and "LBD mon amour" with big love hearts—before being roughly ejected.

Macron's sham 'Great Debate' was a flop—now the state has reverted to violence

Don't unite with the right wing

I WANTED to respond to the letter asking if we can bridge the "left-right" gap to challenge the establishment (Letters, 23 January).

The letter was right to say that the same bitterness that exists in France that we've seen with the Yellow Vests exists over here too.

It was right to say that the people in charge don't care about us.

And it was right to say that we can build a mass movement to challenge austerity.

It's also right to say that lots of people who voted Brexit weren't doing so because they are racist.

They were expressing the bitterness that years of austerity has led to.

But I disagree that we should be uniting with the right, racists or Nazis.

To win we have to work together.

And we have to organise in a way that makes us strongest.

That means black and white, immigrant and not, working together.

Right wingers and racists want to exclude black people, migrants, women and LGBT+ people.

If we include them we could even exclude trade unionists—racists in yellow vests attacked RMT union picket lines in Manchester recently.

Involving the right would mean ending up with a movement that is weakened.

It's no basis for building the kind of movement that we need to win.

Karen Reissmann
Manchester



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

How we won a strong vote for school strikes in Ealing

NEU UNION members voted overwhelmingly to support strikes over pay and school funding.

In my area, Ealing in west London, the turnout of 63 percent was the highest in the country.

Overall the turnout was 31.4 percent. So what was different?

Some things put us at an advantage. Over the years we have built up a high membership density and a high density of reps in schools.

I'm divisional secretary of the union in Ealing and have slightly better facility time than some in other areas.

It's quicker for me to visit more schools than for someone in a rural area.

These things do help. But the thing that made a difference is what I said to teachers.

I visited over 60 schools out of 80-odd across Ealing and argued that this is a good time to strike. The Tories are in disarray and can be beaten.

I asked why so many nurses earn half the wage of Tube drivers? Do they do a less important job?

Someone would always respond that it's because the RMT transport union is militant and has strikes.

And I would say, exactly.

I said low pay and poor services are two sides of the same coin—fighting over pay helps protect services.

I explained that if we strike it

won't be a protest strike—we need to do it properly. It prompted discussion. People asked how much money they might lose through striking and I'd tell them.

I said that I couldn't promise victory if we stand and fight, but I can say what defeat will look like. It will be more of what we've got now but much worse. And that's why parents back us.

In schools with no rep, the thing that really worked was phoning the head teacher. It's their job to balance the books but they are opposed to cuts.

There's a mood to fight and it's possible to tap into it.

Stefan Simms
West London

Upper class bigots get confused over targets

YOU ROUND up scores of young, spoilt, arrogant teenage men from an exclusive, male-only, Catholic-only, fee-paying private school.

You provide them with appropriately bigoted attitudes and uniforms.

And you transport them 500 miles to the capital city to demonstrate against the basic rights of women.

They encounter an old man representing the original inhabitants of the country, who have long-standing, overwhelming

grievances. He obviously represents a different culture. So they take up their aggressive, arrogant, superior stance to try and humiliate him and put him in his place.

That's the problem with upper class bigotry.

You try to focus the contempt onto one group at a time.

But with 99 percent of the population to choose from, it will keep straying onto other targets.

John Murphy
Stockport

Tory rows won't be enough to beat them

THE STRATEGY taken by the Corbyn leadership is one of, "When your enemies are fighting each other, don't interfere."

I'm sure this strategy has been successful for many a campaign leader.

However, this approach misses the overall picture.

It is true that our enemies are at each other's throats, but the cause of their antagonism is the European Union.

But there are two things the Tories and the ruling class are absolutely united on.

One is the continued

Corbyn should up the fight

exploitation and squeezing of the working class to maximise their profits.

The second is their determination, at any cost, to stop a Corbyn-led Labour Party taking

office. Another well-used strategy used by many a successful leader says, "Strike your enemy while they are at their weakest."

This is the attitude that Corbyn and the trade union movement must now adopt.

Failure to hit our enemy while they are weak will allow them to regroup and subject us to continued Tory misrule.

Now is the time to strike our foes and strike hard. Their defeat is not inevitable.

Chris Ayton
East London

Just a thought...

Good reasons for prohibition

ALISTAIR Farrow's article about prohibition (Socialist Worker, 16 January) omitted to discuss why so many women supported and campaigned for it.

Was it not that many women thought restrictions would save them and their sisters from domestic violence regularly meted out by their drunken partners?

That is not to say prohibition was right, but some of its supporters and their intentions were much more progressive than the article portrays.

Adrian Jarvis
Stockport

Why Tories fear Corbyn

CORBYN DOES want Brexit but a Brexit that works for workers. Tories fear Jeremy in power because he is against wars and austerity.

Andres Viveros
On Facebook

Media bias on Yellow Vests

OUR MEDIA is showing very little of the Yellow Vests protests (Ten weeks that shook France, 23 January).

It's as though our puppet media wants a blackout of these heroes.

Melanie Powell
On Twitter

Labour liars in Glasgow

YOUR REPORT on the Glasgow equal pay strike seems to show what people can do when they are united (Socialist Worker, 23 January).

But where were the Labour-controlled unions the previous decade?

Glasgow city council under Labour spent £2.5 million fighting this claim.

Now they have the brass neck to claim their pressure was instrumental in this settlement.

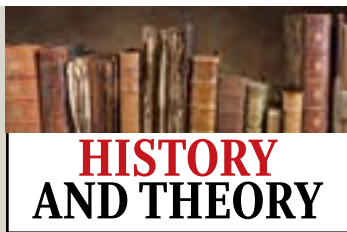
Alan Wilson
On Facebook

Resist racists' rehabilitation

EUGENICS was wrong morally and scientifically then and nothing has changed (Socialist Worker, 23 January).

Smash the Fash!

Kenny Brown
On Facebook



HISTORY
AND THEORY

Tanks on the streets of Glasgow to stop revolt

Strikes and protests in Glasgow 100 years ago showed the power of workers to bring a city to its knees. It also showed the lengths the British state will go to stop them, writes **Gerry Mooney**

IN 1919 the class struggle in Britain rose to unprecedented heights.

It was part of a wave of revolutionary upheaval that shook Europe to its very core. Strikes, protests and threats of mutiny by soldiers, sailors and tanks were mobilised to deploy to the city to stop any such threat and the paranoia and class hatred of the British ruling class was visible to all.

The strikes ultimately did win some victories—a 47-hour working week was introduced.

Unofficial strikes broke out across all sections of industry on 27 January, and over 60,000 people took to the streets four days later.

The near city-wide general strike was condemned by the government, local politicians, bosses and trade union leaderships as being “political” and therefore illegitimate.

This vitriol was soon joined by sustained state violence as the police launched attacks on strikers and their supporters.

Workers had assembled in front of the City Chambers in George Square on 31 January to hear the Lord Provost—head of the council—announce the government’s response to their demands.

On Bloody Friday scores of workers were injured by a police force that was allowed to run amok.

But the workers fought back, and the enduring image is of the



Soldiers against strikers

raising of the red flag on George Square.

The government feared Glasgow was on the brink of a “Bolshevist uprising”. Troops and tanks were mobilised to deploy to the city to stop any such threat and the paranoia and class hatred of the British ruling class was visible to all.

The strikes ultimately did win some victories—a 47-hour working week was introduced.

In the following century, many myths have developed over the events of Glasgow 1919. For instance, tanks weren’t deployed to George Square on the day of Bloody Sunday.

Ripeness

The question asked time and time again is, did the events in Glasgow comprise a revolutionary moment?

It hadn’t matured into one, but if the strike had succeeded it would have opened up the road to revolution.

As anti-war socialist John Maclean said, “the strike was beaten more by a lack of working-class ripeness than by tanks and machine guns”.

It also represented a significant challenge by rank and file workers to the politics and tactics of trade union officials.

Even by their own admission the ruling class had to rely on the union bureaucrats to get them off the hook.

As leading Tory politician Andrew Bonar Law said, “Trade union organisation was the only thing between us and anarchy, without it our position was hopeless”.

Glasgow in 1919 showed that rank and file working class organisation and action can win major victories and frighten our rulers.

Working class self-organisation continues to be the key in the battle against the bosses and the ruling class.



A struggle by Los Angeles teachers over pay, education provision and the privatisation agenda has shown the power of the US working class to resist Trump and the bosses. Strikers and parents spoke to **Alistair Farrow**

STRIKES ARE at the heart of the resistance to US president Donald Trump’s warped vision of society.

What makes this all the more remarkable is that working class struggle in the US has been on a downward trajectory for years. Defeats and sellouts have dogged the trade union movement.

Now striking teachers are at the vanguard of a wave of walkouts.

In 2018 teachers across traditionally Republican-voting states struck and protested for demands including pay. The spirit of rebellion carries on, but the battlefield is changing.

In Los Angeles (LA) 33,000 striking teachers have scored a victory over pay, and conditions for students. They have also challenged the agenda of privatisation fanatics with deep links to the Democratic Party (see box).

It blows a hole in the argument put forward by the Democrats that the resistance to Trump should be subsumed into electoral campaigning.

Striking teacher Nicole Fefferman told Socialist Worker, “The strike has educated people about the choices made by Democratic leaders, about how some have pushed privatisation.”

And Paloma Pressnall, whose children go to an LA state school, said, “The strike has increased awareness about the privatisation of education.”

LA is at the forefront of a national drive to privatise public education.

Charter schools are a part of that drive—they remove schools from democratic control and are subject to fewer regulations. They can also be run for a profit.

Netflix founder, Democrat financial backer and charter school zealot Reed Hastings loves them because “they don’t have an elected school board.”

The fight against privatisation in education is far from over. Both the Republican and Democrat party leaderships will come back for more. But education workers in LA and across the US have shown how to resist.

Succeed

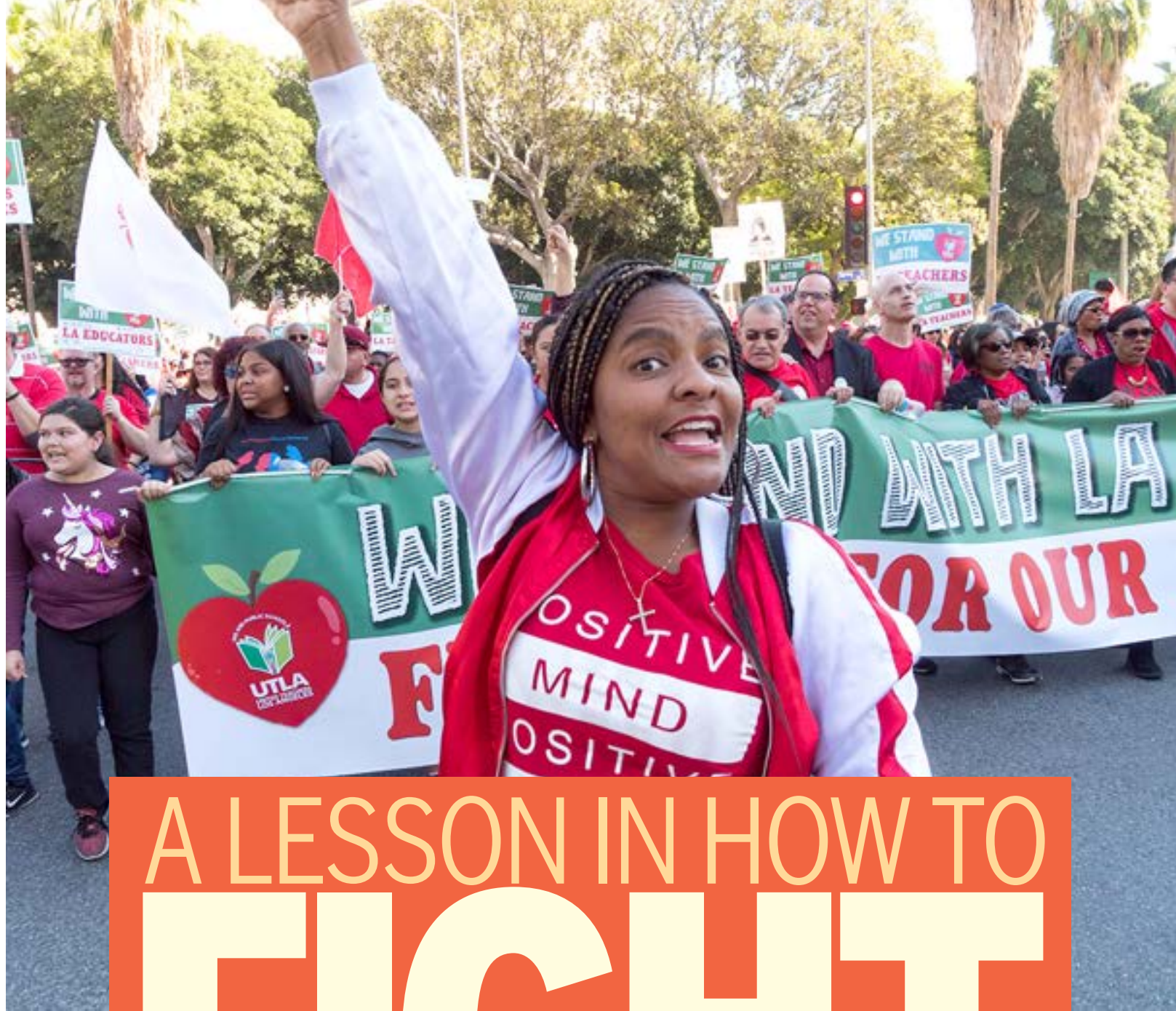
Nicolle argued that the strike was a stage in the fight against privatisation. “It’s going to be a battle, but I feel way more determined to go out and talk to folk now” she said. “There’s a tonne of educating to do about what can happen if privatisation is allowed to succeed in education.”

“The strike has cracked open this conversation and brought it to thousands of people. Now it’s a debate that is happening in the classroom—my students are asking me about the different kinds of charter schools and what we can do about them.”

The support of wider layers of people, particularly parents and students, during the strike was crucial. “It can’t be underestimated,” said Nicolle. “We had over 500,000 kids out of school for over a week.”

“When we voted to go on strike we never imagined the whole city was going to shut down.” A

LOS ANGELES TEACHERS’ STRIKE



A LESSON IN HOW TO FIGHT

staggering 80 percent of LA residents supported the strike, according to one poll.

“The entire city supported the strike,” said Paloma. “The city government opened parks and recreational facilities. They even laid on extra staff so that admission could be free between 8am and 4pm.”

“Museums in town made admission free and provided extra educational materials.”

She added, “Although schools remained open, parents kept their children out.”

“At my children’s school only 15 percent of students came to school, and many of those who sent their kids in supported the strike but couldn’t find childcare.”

Paloma described how parents “helped each other out”. “We juggled childcare and reached out to parents who couldn’t afford to miss work,” she said.

That support was mobilised through the highly political demands of the strike. “There was a pretty broad understanding that the strike was about more than just an increase in salary,” said Paloma.

Civil rights

Nicolle added, “I teach students in high school. There are over 40 students in almost every class—it’s a violation of their civil rights.”

“The district wanted to put numbers up to 50 students in a class.” Students raised demands

themselves, which teachers then took up. LA is one of only three school districts in the US that carries out random searches on students.

These disproportionately target students from ethnic minorities. Students got teachers to add stopping these searches to their demands—which won.

And students took action themselves. They protested outside meetings of the school board to demand schools superintendent Austin Beutner come out and negotiate with them directly.

The struggle is spreading from LA. Thousands of teachers in Virginia struck over funding for state schools on Monday. And teachers in Oakland, California, are in the process of

balloting for strikes. Their demands are similar to those raised in LA—including a pay rise and limits on class sizes.

There are 3,000 teachers in the Oakland Educators Association. They have already staged unofficial “sickouts”—when people call in sick—including one on 17 January which saw hundreds of teachers take part.

And teachers in Denver, Colorado are also joining the fight. Last week members of the almost 6,000-strong Denver Classroom Teachers Association vote for strikes over bonuses by 93 percent.

It shows the potential of the US working class to resist Trump through its own strength, not rely on the Democrats.



MAIN PICTURE: MIAWALEE TEACHERS’ EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

Democrat enemies within

Austin Beutner

- Superintendent of Los Angeles Unified School District—the second largest school district in the US
- Sent by then president Bill Clinton to privatise Russian state resources in 1990
- Co-founder of investment firm Evercore Partners
- No educational experience

Eli Broad

- Personal fortune of £5.6 billion
- Spent over £1.5 million on the 2017 campaign to fill the LAUSD board with pro-charter schoolers
- Founded the Broad Academy in 2002 to train privatisers
- Major Democratic Party donor

Reed Hastings

- Said that state schools need to “adopt the same principles of competition and accountability as exist in the private and non-profit sectors.”
- Gave £5.3 million to the California Charter Schools Association in the run up to the 2017 election
- In total, almost £10 million was raised for the campaign—the most ever raised for a school board election in US history

Winning despite their leaders

RANK AND file teachers were up against both the bosses’ and union leaders’ games.

It took 20 months for the UTLA union to move through seemingly infinite rounds of talks—despite having a 98 percent mandate for strikes.

It called for strikes to begin on 10 January, only to postpone them until the 14 January.

And, after the UTLA had negotiated a deal, it gave strikers just three hours to read the 40-page agreement. In this time they also had to travel back to their schools, giving them hardly any time to read or debate the new contract.

Yet despite union leaders’ manoeuvres, strikers won many of their demands, including more children’s counsellors in schools. Bosses were forced to bring the ratio down closer to one counsellor for every 500 students.

Currently there is one counsellor for between 690 and 890 students.

Nicolle pointed out that a key part of the deal was the elimination of clause 1.5. This clause means that any

commitments taken by school management over class sizes can be reneged upon.

Nicolle stressed how important this was because “at the last minute superintendent Beutner had tried to subvert the agreement”. While commitments to reduce class sizes are small now—just two fewer students for each class—bosses won’t be able to wriggle out of future agreements easily.

But many teachers want more.

Shortcoming

The deal included a 6 percent pay rise and a number of commitments over class sizes and support workers.

Anne Scatolini described it as “just a partial return of the interest free loan teachers gave the district to remain solvent during ‘tough times’”. She was referring to pay freezes and real terms pay cuts teachers endured after the banking crash in 2008.

Despite the shortcoming the LA teachers have won the most of all the US teachers’ strikes—and showed workers’ power to take on the bosses.

“
The question asked is, were events in Glasgow a revolutionary moment?”

WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state — a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties. We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests. We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to www.swp.org.uk or phone 020 7840 5602 for more information

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } PUBLIC MEETINGS

BIRMINGHAM

Know your enemy — alt-right, the far right and fascists

Wed 6 Feb, 7pm,
Birmingham LGBT Centre,
38/40 Holloway Circus,
B1 1EQ

BLACK COUNTRY

MacDonald, Attlee, Corbyn — lessons from Labour Party history

Wed 6 Feb, 7.30pm,
Wild Bytes Cafe,
Darlington St, WV1 4HW

BURNLEY AND PENDLE

System change not climate change

Wed 6 Feb, 7pm,
The Library Building,
Colne Rd, BB10 1LL

CHESTERFIELD

A Marxist history of the Labour Party

Thu 7 Feb, 7pm,
Chesterfield Library,
New Beetwell St, S40 1QN

EDINBURGH

Red Clydeside 100 years on — was revolution possible?

Wed 6 Feb, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
7 Victoria St, EH1 2JL

LEEDS: CITY CENTRE

Antisemitism, the far right, Zionism and the left

Thu 7 Feb, 7pm,
The Swarthmore
Education Centre,
2-7 Woodhouse
Square, LS3 1AD

LONDON: SOUTH EAST

Knife crime — why are young people killing each other?

Wed 6 Feb, 7pm,
Deptford Lounge,
9 Giffin St,
SE8 4RH

MANCHESTER: CENTRAL

Women, resistance and revolution — fighting sexism and exploitation

Wed 6 Mar, 7pm,
Friends Meeting House,
6 Mount St, M2 5NS

NEWCASTLE

Women, resistance and revolution — fighting sexism and exploitation

Thu 7 Mar, 7pm,
Commercial Union House,
39 Pilgrim St,
NE1 6QE

SHEFFIELD AND SOUTH YORKSHIRE

Know your enemy — alt right, the far right and fascists

Thu 7 Feb, 7pm,
Central United
Reform Church,
60 Norfolk St,
S1 2JB

YORK

Women, resistance & revolution — fighting sexism and exploitation

Wed 6 Mar, 7.30pm,
Sea Horse Hotel,
4 Fawcett St,
YO10 4AH

SOCIALIST WORKER BRANCH MEETINGS

VENEZUELA

What's behind the coup?

ABERDEEN

Mon 4 Feb, 6pm,
The Snug,
Ma Cameron's,
6-8 Little Belmont St,
AB10 1JG

DONCASTER

Tue 12 Feb, 7.30pm,
Goose,
53-54 Hall Gate, DN1 3PB

GLASGOW

Thu 7 Feb, 7pm,
Avant Garde,
33-44 King St,
Merchant City,
G1 5QT

LONDON: ISLINGTON

Wed 6 Feb, 7pm,
The Old Fire Station,
84 Mayton St, N7 6QT

NORWICH

Thu 7 Feb, 7.30pm,
Vauxhall Centre,
Johnson Place,
NR2 2SA

OXFORD

Wed 6 Feb, 7.30pm,
Restore Building,
Manzil Way,
OX4 1YH

PLYMOUTH

Thu 7 Feb, 7pm,
Quaker House,
74 Mutley Plain,
PL4 6LF

SCARBOROUGH

Wed 6 Feb, 7.30pm,
Tap and Spile,
94 Falsgrave Rd,
YO12 5AZ

SWANSEA

Thu 7 Feb, 7.30pm,
Brynmill Community Centre,
St Albans Rd, SA2 0BP

YORK

Wed 6 Feb, 7.30pm,
Sea Horse Hotel,
4 Fawcett St,
YO10 4AH

JUAN GUAIDO wants to seize the presidency

{ SOCIALIST WORKER } BRANCH MEETINGS

Weekly meetings to discuss political issues and our local interventions. All welcome.

BARNSELY

Going beyond the binary — Marxism, gender and trans politics

Thu 14 Feb, 7pm,
Room 302 — The Civic,
Hanson St, S70 2HZ

BOLTON

The day the Zulus beat the British empire

Wed 6 Feb, 7pm,
Bolton Socialist Club,
16 Wood St (off
Bradshawgate), BL1 1DY

BRADFORD

Going beyond the binary — Marxism, gender and trans politics

Thu 7 Feb, 7pm,
Glyde House,
Little Horton Lane
(opposite the ice rink),
BD5 0BQ

BRISTOL

100 years since Rosa Luxemburg's murder — the German Revolution

Wed 6 Feb, 7.30pm,
YHA, 14 Narrow Quay,
BS1 4QA

COVENTRY

Brexit, borders and the case for a united Ireland

Wed 6 Feb, 7.30pm,
The Golden Cross,
8 Hay Ln, CV1 5RF

DERBY

1919 — Britain on the brink of revolution

Thu 7 Feb, 7pm,
West End Community Centre,
Mackworth Rd
(next to Britannia
Mill), DE22 3BL

HARLOW

100 years since Rosa Luxemburg's murder — the German Revolution

Thu 14 Feb, 7.30pm,
Friends Meeting House,
1 Church Leys,
CM18 6BX

HUDDERSFIELD

1919 — Britain on the brink of revolution

Wed 6 Feb, 6.30pm,
Brian Jackson House,
2 New North Parade
(near both train and bus
stations), HD1 5JP

HULL

How women really won the vote

Thu 21 Feb, 7pm,
Cafe Licious,
104 Cottingham Rd, HU6 7RZ

KENT

100 years since Rosa Luxemburg's murder — the German Revolution

Thu 7 Feb, 7.30pm,
Nucleus Arts Centre
(Conference Room),
272 High St, ME4 4BP

LANCASTER AND MORECAMBE

A Marxist history of The Labour Party

Thu 7 Feb, 7pm,
Friends Meeting House,
Meeting House Lane, LA1 1TX

LIVERPOOL

Know your enemy — alt right, far right & fascists

Wed 13 Feb, 7pm,
Friends Meeting House,
22 School Ln, L1 3BT

LONDON: HACKNEY

Brexit, borders and the case for a united Ireland

Thu 7 Feb, 7.30pm,
The Round Chapel,
2 Powerscroft Rd (corner
Lower Clapton Rd), E5 0PU

LONDON: HARINGEY

In the era of Trump and Bolsonaro — fighting for LGBT+ liberation

Wed 6 Feb, 7.30pm,
St John Vianney Church Hall,
386 West Green Rd
(corner Vincent Rd),
N15 3QH

LONDON: NEWHAM

Who decides the limits of free speech?

Wed 6 Feb, 7pm,
Stratford Advice Arcade,
107-109 The Grove, E15 1HP

LONDON: SOUTH

Politics of the mind — Marxism and mental distress

Wed 6 Feb, 7pm,
Vida Walsh Centre,
2b Saltoun Rd (near Effra Rd,
facing Windrush Square),
Brixton, SW2 1EP

LONDON: TOWER HAMLETS

Brexit, borders and the case for a united Ireland

Wed 6 Feb, 7pm,
Epainos Church,
Lichfield Road, E3 5AT

LONDON: WALTHAM FOREST

Why we oppose all border controls

Wed 6 Feb, 7.30pm,
William Morris
Community Centre,
6-8 Greenleaf Rd,
E17 6QQ

LONDON: WEST & NORTH WEST

100 years since Rosa Luxemburg's murder — the German Revolution

Thu 7 Feb, 7.30pm,
Woodlane Community Centre,
78 White City Cl,
Shepherd's Bush, W12 7DZ

MANCHESTER: CENTRAL

100 years since Rosa Luxemburg's murder — the German Revolution

Wed 6 Feb, 7pm,
Friends Meeting House,
6 Mount St,
M2 5NS

NEWCASTLE

1919 — Britain on the brink of revolution

Thu 7 Feb, 7pm,
Commercial Union House,
39 Pilgrim St,
NE1 6QE

NOTTINGHAM

Fascism and the rise of the far right — how do we fight it?

Wed 6 Feb, 7.30pm,
International
Community Centre,
61b Mansfield Rd,
NG1 3FN

PORTSMOUTH

In the era of Trump and Bolsonaro — fighting for LGBT+ liberation

Wed 6 Feb, 7.30pm,
Somerstown
Community Centre,
River's St,
PO5 4EZ

WIGAN

Going beyond the binary — Marxism, gender and trans politics

Thu 7 Feb, 7pm,
The Brocket Arms,
38 Mesnes Rd,
WN1 2DD

{ MOVEMENT EVENTS }

DORCHESTER

Rock Against Racism 2019

Sat 9 Feb, 7pm,
Dorchester Corn Exchange,
High E St,
DT1 1HF

The movement and the vote

Sat 2 Feb, 1.30pm,
Colliton Club,
Colliton Park, DT1 1XJ
Hosted by the Dorset Socialists

{ STAND UP TO RACISM }

NATIONAL

Decolonising education — confronting racism on campus conference

Saturday 16 Feb, 10.30am,
National Education Union,
Hamilton House,
Mabledon Place,
London, WC1H 9BD

For more information,
go to bit.ly/Decolonise

NATIONAL

Stand Up To Racism Trade Union Conference 2019

Saturday 23 Feb, 10.30am,
National Education Union,
Hamilton House,
Mabledon Place,
London, WC1H 9BD

For more information,
go to bit.ly/SUTRtradeunions

NATIONAL

UN anti-racism day demos

Saturday 16 March, 12 noon,
London, Glasgow, Cardiff

For more information,
go to bit.ly/AntiRacismDay

NATIONAL

Protest! Don't let the far right hijack 'Yellow Vests' movement

Saturday 30 March, 10 am,
Central London

For more information,
go to bit.ly/OurGiletJaunes

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Dismissed for decades, now Bonnard takes centre stage

The French painter is typecast as being a bit lightweight, but a new exhibition at Tate Britain reveals a melancholy and tender artist, writes **Ben Windsor**

THE TATE Modern is staging the first major show of French painter Pierre Bonnard's work in Britain for 20 years.

It's on a grand scale with more than a hundred paintings spread over thirteen rooms.

Bonnard polarises opinion, which is surprising for a painter who is best known for images of cosy domesticity, infused with colour and light.

Fellow Painter Henri Matisse praised him as "a great artist for our time" whereas Pablo Picasso couldn't stand him.

Many in the industry considered him too facile, too eager to please.

He even tends to get overlooked by official art histories.

But because he kept ploughing his own furrow and showed little desire to pursue the latest artistic fashions, he became hard to categorise and easy to neglect.

This was especially true in the US, where a definition of modern art was being developed in the mid-20th century that would exclude Bonnard.

Commune

Bonnard was born in 1867 shortly before the Franco-Prussian war—and the Paris Commune—and was raised in a suburb of Paris close to Versailles.

His father was a prominent official in the French ministry of war. He was keen for Bonnard to become a lawyer, but didn't seem too upset when he took a more bohemian path.

The curators of the Tate Modern's exhibition say they're aiming to



PIERRE BONNARD'S *The Studio with Mimosa* (1939-46)

subvert our preconceptions about this artist "on the periphery of the canon, who we think we know".

In many ways they achieve this admirably.

They've gathered works from across five decades, which are testament to both Bonnard's desire to experiment and his idiosyncratic

vision. Wandering around, it also becomes clear that his paintings are a tender—and increasingly melancholy—record of a 50 year love affair with his working class partner, Marthe de Meligny.

The common notion of Bonnard as a "painter of happiness" doesn't survive a close viewing of his work.

Bonnard's own response to the charge was to observe, "He who sings is not always happy".

Despite the beauty of his paintings and their depiction of the French middle classes, they are often suffused with sadness and occasionally anguish.

This is most marked in the late self portraits.

Photography clearly had a great influence. Some of his preparatory photos are on display here, but they are so tiny you'll need a magnifying glass to see much in them.

From this new medium he assimilated a great deal—the experimental compositions, the cropping, the blurred motion, the capture of fleeting poses and transient expressions.

Liberates

His figures don't seem to be posing at all—they're just absorbed in their regular activities.

His technique liberates them from the need to stand, sit or lay rigid for hours on end.

Bonnard had a very particular way of working—preferring to do so from memory, from rough sketches, photos, and notes.

He was keen not to be distracted by the details.

This approach lends his work great emotive power. And the haziness of the paintings means they take a while to decipher.

As you observe them they slowly unfurl, revealing surprises, jokes—and apparitions.

Pierre Bonnard—the colour of memory
Tate Modern, Until 6 May
Tickets £18/£17

ART

SYLVIA PANKHURST
Tate Britain, Millbank

THE TATE Britain has added four paintings by the socialist Sylvia Pankhurst to its permanent collection.

The paintings depict workers in Glasgow textile factories and the Stoke potteries. They were the result of a 1907 tour by



On a Pot Bank Finishing Off the Edges of the Unbaked Plates on a Whirler by Sylvia Pankhurst

Pankhurst of working class areas of Britain.

Ironically, the works were acquired with a grant to the Tate from the Denise Coates Foundation. Coates is the boss of Bet 365, with an annual pay packet of over £250 million.

FILM

MANIKARNIKA—THE QUEEN OF JHANSI

Directed by Kangana Ranaut and Krish. On limited release

THIS FILM tells the story of the life of Rani Lakshmibai and how she fought British rule. It adds to the body of accounts of the iconic figure who died fighting the British during India's first war of independence.

Nominations at the Oscars respond to #MeToo era

FILM

THIS YEAR'S Oscars will take some living up to the hype.

In the era of #MeToo the academy is keen to show itself as responsive to the movement's demands.

It's likely that either *Roma* or *The Favourite* will take at least one award between them.

They both feature women in leading roles and have each received multiple nominations.

Despite this, there are no nominations for women in the best director



Yalitza Aparicio as Cleo in *Roma*, directed by Alfonso Cuarón

category, even though the last year saw great films directed by women.

Lynne Ramsay's *You Were Never Really Here* was a brutal examination of someone suffering post-traumatic stress, and surely deserving of at least a nomination.

Instead Spike Lee is a potential winner for his *Blackkkklansman*.

It's one of the gaping flaws of the culture establishment that people are recognised when it's "their turn", not when they should be.

Mahershala Ali's performance in the yet to be released *Green Book* is

worthy of recognition.

The film is the story of a black classical pianist travelling across the Deep South with a white driver.

Other films are notable from their absence from the awards list.

Steve McQueen's intelligent action hit *Widows* teems with originality and great cinematography yet has been overlooked by almost every award ceremony.

Other notable exceptions include the adaptation of James Baldwin's novel *If Beale Street Could Talk* by Moonlight director Barry Jenkins.

Event at
BOOKMARKS
the socialist bookshop
Art for All

With author
Christine Lindey
Friday 8 February
6.30pm

Entry
£2



1 Bloomsbury Street,
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020 7637 1848
bookmarksbookshop.co.uk

HOW many things do you own that “spark joy” for you? That’s the question organisation expert Marie Kondo has got millions of people asking themselves.

Her new TV programme *Tidying Up*, released on Netflix in January, has proven to be a smash hit.

In each episode Kondo teaches hapless residents how to declutter their homes using the “KonMari” method.

Families are encouraged to collect their items in a big pile, hold each one in turn, and see if it “sparks joy” for them. Everything else goes in the bin. It’s so popular, charity shops around the world are reporting a spike in donations.

This is not just a TV programme about well-ordered linen closets and neatly organised shoe racks, though. It’s about a complete transformation of your life.

The homes that Kondo visits are often creaking at the seams with objects their owners neither want nor use. The idea is to turn those homes into “spaces of joy” that are filled with possessions that owners really love.

For Kondo, the opportunities are limitless. “When you organise things, you can put your life in order, too”, she said.

“The tidying process is not about decluttering your house or making it look neat on the spur of the moment for visitors. You are about to tidy up in a way that will spark joy in your life and change it forever”.

But joy doesn’t come cheap.

An army of certified KonMari consultants can organise your house for you, charging £76 per hour, for a minimum of five hours, plus travel costs. Some more experienced consultants cost even more.

The trademarked KonMari brand sells not just a method to get rid of your unwanted belongings—but an opportunity to achieve your “ideal life”.

Magic

What does it say about the world we live in that people will happily part with large sums of money to enrich their lives through the magic of tidying?

And why is it that people continue to own so much stuff that they’re unable to move around their own homes in the first place?

Tidying Up doesn’t reflect the experiences of the vast majority of people who struggle to make ends meet—over 14 million live in poverty in Britain.

But it does shine a light on some of the problems of everyday family life. Some of the houses are full of clutter because of the time-consuming nature of children and work.

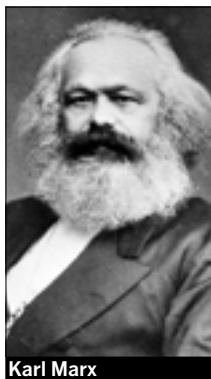
It also showcases one of the most easily recognisable features of capitalism—the mass



MARIE KONDO says you should keep the things that make you happy

KARL MARX CAN SPARK JOY FOR YOU

Sarah Bates enjoys Marie Kondo’s new show *Tidying Up*. But, she writes, its popularity says something deeper about life under capitalism and our relationship to commodities



Karl Marx

buying and selling of goods. Some owners have spent decades building collections—of Christmas decorations, baseball cards or shoes.

In others the sentimental value attached to inanimate objects makes it impossible for their owners to get rid of them.

Filling homes and lives with objects we enjoy helps cope with the constant difficulties life throws at us, and helps develop a sense of identity.

For instance one episode



The way we live at home is a product of how society is organised

features a migrant woman struggle to throw away clothes that fostered a sense of connection with her country of origin.

The way we live at home, like everything else in society, is a product of how that society is organised.

In the world of KonMari the notoriously untidy figure of Karl Marx probably looks a little out of place.

But like Kondo, Marx was also interested in the strange and complicated relationship

between people and the things they own.

More than a century before mass advertising and TV shopping channels, Marx wrote about how owning commodities gave people a sense of purpose.

“Through money I can have anything the human heart desires,” he wrote. “Do I not therefore possess all human abilities? Does not money therefore transform all my incapability into their opposite?”

For Marx, the buying and selling of commodities shaped everything about human life. He wrote about how access to commodities allowed people to gain control, or at least a sense of control over their lives.

Key elements of life are reduced to items to be bought and sold for profit. Items have a usefulness that Marx called use value. But crucially they are “worth” what can be traded for—what Marx called exchange value.

“An object is only ours when we have it, when it exists for us as capital or when we directly possess, eat, drink, wear, inhabit it” he said.

But he went further and analysed how work under capitalism shaped both the end product of labour and individual.

UNDER capitalism, workers are separated from the products of their labour—this is a fundamental difference to how societies were organised before.

For instance, those who make computers won’t see the finished product of their labour. They may produce the hard drive, but won’t ever come into contact with the RAM, keyboard or monitor.

Workers are wrenched from any effective control of the process of production.

This creates a dynamic where workers are estranged from the finished product of their skill, time and creativity.

Marx called this alienation—and although others had used this term before, for Marx it was a feature of the material world, a product of the social system, not something that existed in someone’s head.

The development of capitalism in the 19th century saw a dramatic transformation in the way in which people worked.

Work stopped being performed in the home, or in the fields, and workers flocked to factories where work was undertaken together.

Because the bosses control the means of production, workers became dependent on the factory owner paying them a wage.

The end result of the workers’ labour is owned by the boss, despite it being the worker, not the boss, who has creatively made it.

So bosses get rich off paying workers less than the value they create. In capitalism, everything has a price. Even

things necessary for human life—water, food or shelter—are commodities.

It can seem the most natural thing in the world for commodities to be such a central feature of life.

Marx said that in capitalist society, wealth appeared as “an immense collection of commodities”.

But this process of constant buying and selling transforms relationships between individual humans into a relationship between commodities.

In this “system of all-round material dependence” workers are divided from each other, but rely on the fruits of each other’s labour to survive.

For instance, a baker lacks the materials and skills to construct a house—but the builder relies on the baker’s time and creativity to make a loaf of bread.

Marx called this “commodity fetishism”—where the central relationship in this process appears to be between commodities—not the workers who produced them.

The labour that went into baking a loaf of bread, or building a house is never acknowledged, and the worker becomes invisible.

Money makes all this possible. It allows commodities to be valued at different rates, and it means transaction between commodities runs smoothly.

Forced

Workers live in a world where they are forced to produce products that they themselves, could not afford.

And people are bombarded with adverts that imbue material objects with all sorts of qualities that will improve their lives.

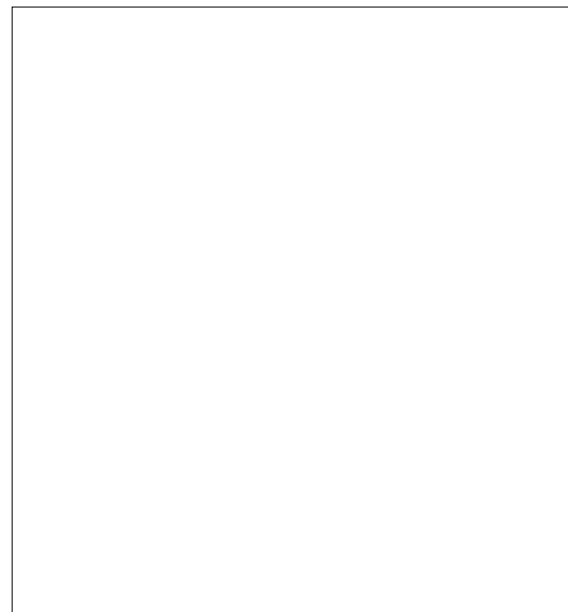
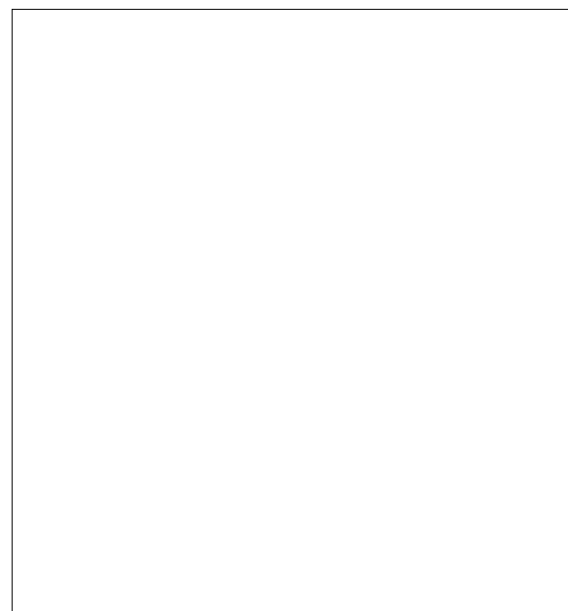
Every day firms pump out propaganda that explains how their product will improve you as an individual.

How many car or perfume adverts carry the message that buying their product will improve sexual prowess?

Bosses can get away with this because under capitalism human relationships are so distorted that commodities are able to fill the void created by a society run for profit.

As engaging as Marie Kondo is—and as much as she connects with those who feel overwhelmed by life—tidying up, sadly, won’t help us take control of our lives.

To live in a world without alienation, there will have to be



Childcare and work can leave us with little time for housework (top), while the way work is organised leaves us disconnected from what we produce—and each other (above)

total transformation of society.

In a socialist society production would be based on human need—not because bosses’ want to make a profit. And the people who do the producing will be in charge of running it.

This will fundamentally change not only workplace experiences, but the human relationship to the natural world and individuals themselves.

When there is real choice over elements of life, the markets for both unwanted items and decluttering services will be unnecessary.

Commodities that are wrongly sold to us as fulfilling one or other human need and desire simply wouldn’t make sense.

To live in a world that truly “sparks joy”, capitalism has got to go.

READ MORE

● **An Introduction to Marx’s Theory of Alienation**

by Judy Cox
bit.ly/AlienationCox

● **Capital Volume 1**

by Karl Marx
£18.99

● **A Reader’s Guide to Marx’s Capital**
by Joseph Choonara
£9.99

● **Estranged Labour (from Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844)**
by Karl Marx. Online at bit.ly/EstrangedLabour

Available at Bookmarks, the socialist bookshop. Phone 020 7637 1848 or go to bookmarksbookshop.co.uk



Dismantling an education system for the powerful

Public schools help to entrench an unequal society. We can build something better, writes **Miriam Scharf**

IN NEW book *Engines of Privilege*, authors Francis Green and David Kynaston say loud and clear that Britain’s private schools are a social problem.

It looks at a system where the rich can pay for a separate and much better-resourced education for their children.

We are reminded that our governments—both Labour and Tory—are largely made up of posh boys.

The authors argue this phenomenon is unique to Britain.

They are alarmed at the public school clique, a lack of social mobility and the travesty of unequal opportunity of education.

Green and Kynaston show how private schools provide access to Oxbridge, then well-paid jobs and the social network of power and privilege.

This inequality is indefensible. It means the rich and their lobbyists are always ready with dishonest and spurious arguments.

But they rarely have to engage their forces, so weak have been the attempts to challenge the unfair school system.

Derailed

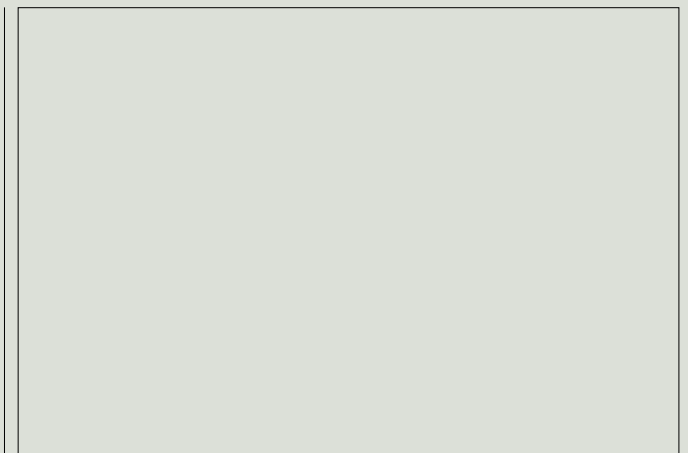
They do however detail the few real attempts to tackle these “engines of privilege” under Labour and Tory governments—and the ways changes have been derailed.

This provides important background for their main focus.

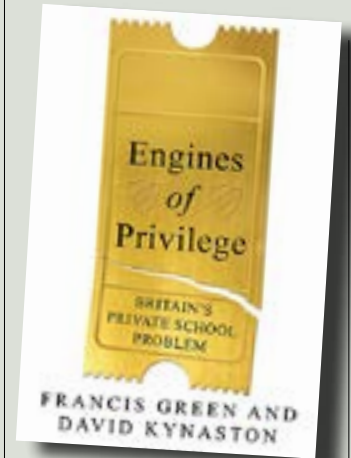
The motivation behind writing the book is not merely to describe the gross inequality of education, but to change it.

The authors show convincingly that no systems of bursaries, sponsorships or partnerships have had any impact.

And they also argue that removal of tax relief or charitable status would



THE RICH pour out of private schools and into boardrooms



Green and Kynaston think elite universities should be made to fill a quota from private schools.

And they approve of Labour’s manifesto commitment to increase tax on private school fees.

But better, they say, would be to start the integration of private schools into the state sector.

This could pose problems—as partial integration could end up with the state subsidising private schools.

They suggest around 33 percent of state-funded pupils in a school with both fee-paying and non fee-paying students.

Green and Kynaston finally consider and then quickly reject a policy of full integration, with no places left for fee payers.

“barely register on the Richter scale of their bursars’ anxieties”.

The penultimate chapter examines options for reform”.

This is the nitty gritty. Socialists, left Labour Party members and educationalists could skip to here.

Various ways of resolving the problem are offered.

They suggest more open recruitment by bosses, which would involve workers stating their schooling on job applications.

Bursaries or sponsorships have not had any impact on the system

“Reform of the private schools will not alone be sufficient to achieve a good education for all, let alone a good society, but surely it is a necessary condition,” is the authors’ conclusion.

This book provides warnings and lessons of what doesn’t work and ideas of what policies could work to dismantle these “engines of privilege”.

Their message—enough outrage, it’s time for action.

Engines of Privilege
By Francis Green and David Kynaston
Available from Bookmarks

Duckenfield 'not experienced enough'

by SADIE ROBINSON

POLICE MATCH commander David Duckenfield was not "experienced enough" on the day of the Hillsborough football disaster, a court has heard.

Some 96 Liverpool fans died after a crush in pens 3 and 4 at the Leppings Lane end of Sheffield Wednesday's stadium in 1989.

Retired police inspector William Crawford said that Duckenfield wasn't experienced enough on the day. He said this was the fault of the "person that put him there".

Crawford was monitoring turnstiles A-G at the Leppings Lane end. Gate C was opened at 2.52pm to relieve a crush outside the turnstiles.

Most fans who entered went down a tunnel leading to pens 3 and 4.

Crawford said if he'd been warned he could have closed a gate to block off the tunnel.

When called onto the pitch after the match was stopped, he said he received no instructions from senior officers.

He agreed that he could be described as the "eyes and



FLOWERS TO remember victims of the Hillsborough disaster

PICTURE: EDMUND GALL/FICKR

ears on the ground" for the terraces.

But he said he thought people who could see CCTV of the area would respond to what was happening.

Duckenfield faces charges of manslaughter by gross negligence for the deaths of 95 fans. He cannot be

charged over the death of the 96th, Tony Bland, as he died four years after the disaster.

Graham Mackrell, then Sheffield Wednesday's safety officer, faces two charges relating to safety breaches. Both deny the charges.

The trial has heard evidence that the 1989 FA Cup

semi-final was policed differently to previous semi-finals held at Hillsborough.

Retired officer Kevin Godley described rings of officers checking tickets and monitoring fans in 1988.

Liverpool fan David Essery described the policing oper-

MORE ONLINE

Full coverage of the trials is at socialistworker.co.uk

● Hillsborough—trials of David Duckenfield and Graham Mackrell begin in Preston
bit.ly/trialsbegin

● Gross failure was substantial cause of deaths at Hillsborough
bit.ly/grossfailure

● Police said they would divert fans from full pens
bit.ly/divertfans

● Safety experts expressed concerns before disaster
bit.ly/safetyfears

● Duckenfield 'not experienced enough' on day of disaster
bit.ly/Duckenfield

But he disagreed that policing outside the turnstiles was well organised.

Morath wrote to the Home Office after the 1989 disaster describing his experience in 1987.

He referred to police and stewards failing to steward the crowd properly, and there being no attempts to direct fans into particular sections.

Retired police officer Alan Ramsden told the court there were "no real instructions" on how to handle the crowd outside the turnstiles in 1989.

"We were useless, we were not fulfilling any function at all," he said.

Liverpool fan Geoffrey Bridson was in pen 4. "You couldn't control where you moved to," he said.

"The crushing was so great you were pushed side to side. I started to get frightened.

"One of the awful things was, you knew, I knew, other people knew we were actually standing on people."

The trial continues.

What's your story?

Email with your ideas
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2. Name(s) of account holder(s)

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What will a Tory Brexit mean for EU migrants?

Tomáš Tengely-Evans cuts through the confusion of the Tories' EU Settlement Scheme—a racist mechanism for punishing migrants

THE TORIES are using Brexit as an excuse to strengthen Britain's vicious immigration system. They are forcing European Union (EU) migrants to register in order to stay after Britain leaves the EU.

It's a disgraceful attack on three million people who have made their lives in Britain—many for decades.

Attacks on migrants encourage racism and help to divide ordinary people—so we all have an interest in resisting them.

But what will Brexit actually mean for migrants?

What do EU migrants have to do to stay in Britain?

Migrants have to apply to the “EU Settlement Scheme” if they want to stay in Britain after the “transition period” following Brexit.

Britain is officially set to leave the EU on 29 March this year, and the transition period would end on 30 June 2021.

Successful applicants to the scheme will keep the right to work in Britain, use the NHS and education services and access some benefits and pensions.

And they will be able to travel in and out of Britain—and stay out for up to five years.

People will have to declare any criminal convictions as part of the process. Confusion—and fear of

being turned down—will put some people off applying altogether.

This could create a layer of vulnerable unregistered migrants.

What are the different statuses?

Only EU migrants who have lived in Britain for a “continuous five year period” can apply for “settled status”.

People who have been here for less than five years have to apply for “pre-settled status”.

If successful, they can then apply for “settled status” once they have lived in Britain for a “continuous five year period”.

People under 21 can apply for the same immigration status as their parents—in which case they will be forced to prove their relationship with their parents.

It isn't always clear which status people are eligible for.

The Roma Support Group said that government department records have wrongly stated that some applicants are only entitled to apply for “pre-settled status”.

These kind of problems could leave some migrants without official legal status after the transition period ends.

Does it make a difference if migrants have “settled” or “pre-settled” status?

There are not many differences between “settled status” and “pre-settled status”.

But there are some—and they are designed to make it difficult for migrants to build a life in Britain.

So children born to people with “settled status” will automatically be eligible to become British subjects. Children born to people with “pre-settled status” will have to apply for British citizenship independently.

Or, if one of their parents is British, they will have to go through a complicated process to prove they have citizenship by descent. Similarly, if people have

THERE IS widespread anger at the Tory drive to push up racism

lived in Britain for five years their family members can come here on a family visa.

Family members of those with “pre-settled status” do not have the same rights.

What about people who came to Britain before their home countries joined the EU? And what about Irish nationals?

People who were granted indefinite leave to remain in Britain before their home countries joined the EU don't have to apply to the settlement scheme.

They have the right to permanent residency already.

Yet there's still uncertainty. When one migrant with indefinite leave to remain contacted the EU Settlement hotline last week they were advised to apply for “settled status” anyway.

People with indefinite leave to remain will have a stamp in their passport. But they won't necessarily keep old passports—and so don't necessarily have the proof.

And if people came here as children, the proof is often only written into one of their parents' passports.

Indefinite leave to remain status should be attached to people's passport number.

But the migrant calling the hotline was told that the possibility of “an IT glitch or whatever” meant it was better to apply for “settled status”.

Irish nationals are covered by the Common Travel Area between Britain and Ireland.

This agreement means people can move between Britain and Ireland with minimal controls.

Does the scrapping of the £65 fee for people who want to apply for “settled status” show a shift in Tory policy?

Home secretary Sajid Javid claimed the scrapping of the fee showed that “we want EU citizens to stay—deal or no deal”.

Many people rightly saw the fee as an insult, and the retreat over it shows the Tories' weakness. But a raft of nasty policies remain.

The settlement scheme is wrapped up in xenophobia.

People will have to jump through hoops to keep the rights they already have.

The Home Office can ask for “supporting documents”, alongside ID, to prove how long

someone has lived in Britain.

But some people won't have been given documents such as pay slips and bank statements—or won't have kept them.

Dealing with this bureaucracy will be harder for people who are more vulnerable or who don't have access to computers.

Racism means western European migrants who are white will be treated differently than Roma people from Romania or Slovakia for instance.

The fight is still on to defend migrants' rights.

What should socialists argue?

The EU Settlement Scheme is not part of the Tories' Brexit deal, officially known as the EU Withdrawal Agreement.

It's an independent policy of the British government.

This means the government can keep it or change it—whether there's a deal with the EU or not.

Anti-racists should argue for the EU Settlement Scheme to be scrapped.

EU migrants should have the right to remain in Britain without having to pass through the state's immigration rules.

And the fight to defend the three million should be part of a bigger fight to defend and extend freedom of movement for all migrants.



People will have to jump through hoops to keep the rights they already have

Tory home secretary Sajid Javid is no friend of migrants



What's your story?

Email with your ideas
reports@socialistworker.co.uk

IN BRIEF

Save services at Lambeth council

CAMPAIGNERS IN Lambeth, south London, protested last Saturday over the Labour-run council's plans to axe five children's centres.

The protest was called by Lambeth Unison union and Lambeth Save Our Services.

Workers, children and their parents demanded council bosses back off.

They said, "Children's centres are a lifeline for parents, carers and children in the borough, providing vital services for all our families—but especially those most in need of support."

"They are precious and we say to Lambeth council—Hands off!"

Strike to get chicken bosses on the run

SPECIALIST poultry catchers in Suffolk could strike over bosses' attacks on public holiday working.

The seven Unite union members will vote on whether to strike after being told they will have to work on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Year's Day.

The workers—employed by Hook 2 Sisters food production firm—capture chickens being reared in sheds and put them in crates ready for slaughter.

Drug workers back higher pay strikes

A UNANIMOUS vote for strikes could see workers at a pharmaceutical manufacturing company walk out to demand higher pay.

Unite union members at Recipharm in Holmes Chapel, Cheshire, are set to strike for three days in February following a breakdown in talks with the company.

Bosses have offered only a 2 percent pay increase.

The 29 workers are set to walk out for 49 hours from 6am on 12, 19 and 26 February.

Taxi drivers block central London

HUNDREDS OF minicab drivers blocked Blackfriars bridge in London for the third week in a row on Monday.

They were protesting against the lifting of an exemption which means currently they do not have to pay the central London congestion charge.

The drivers are in United Private Hire Drivers (UPHD), part of the IWGB union.

UPHD argues the drivers could lose as much as 25 percent of their pay if Transport for London's (TfL) proposal goes ahead.

Many drivers only make the equivalent of the minimum wage. TfL should make paying the London Living Wage of £10.55 an hour a condition of taxi firms operating in London such as Uber.

ROYAL MAIL



POSTAL WORKERS at an Essex mail centre staged a mass sit-in on Wednesday last week over treatment by management. CWU union members at the Southend mail processing unit held a sit-in in the canteen before returning to work.

PICTURE: @CWUNews ON TWITTER

VICTIMISATION

Union members stand with Karen Reissmann

by TOMÁŠ TENGELY-EVANS

THE UNISON union leadership is facing growing calls to reinstate victimised health worker Karen Reissmann.

Karen was suspended from her democratically-elected union positions on the Unison national executive council (NEC) and health service group executive.

She was a leading critic of the NHS pay deal that the leaders of 13 union missold to their members.

Activists in Unison have been organising support in their workplaces and union branches.

Health workers at the Unison mental health branch in Stockport took a group photograph with signs demanding Karen's reinstatement.

Other groups who have held similar actions include Trafford trades council. This



Solidarity with Karen

is an important way of raising awareness about Karen's suspension.

The Reinstate Karen Reissmann campaign said, "There has been no acknowledgement from the union but it seems clear that Karen continues to be suspended. The NEC was told last October Karen is not suspended under Rule I of Unison rules."

"The only other possibility

seems to be Appendix Two. It added, "The process for this is draconian."

"Panels hearing cases can refuse to hear witnesses, refuse to consider documents and refuse to allow witnesses to be questioned on particular areas."

If the Unison leadership is allowed to silence Karen, it could move further against the left.

What you can do

- Invite a speaker to a campaign meeting in your area
- If you haven't already, sign the statement at bit.ly/ReinstateKarenReissmann
- Like and share the Reinstate Karen Reissmann Facebook page
- Take a selfie at work or in your union meeting with the Reinstate Karen Reissmann sign—available from the Facebook page
- Support Karen and the other Unison Action left candidates in the Unison NEC elections.

TRANSPORT

Bus workers' strikes drive up low pay in north east

BUS DRIVERS in the north east of England have declared victory in their fight for better pay.

Unite union members working for Arriva North East voted by 395 to 230 to accept an improved pay offer last week.

A planned ten-day strike from Monday of this week was called off.

The workers have won hourly rate increases for drivers with less than three years' service, and a new top pay rate of £10.60 an hour.

It follows a seven-day strike in January that had a big impact on bus services in

Darlington, Durham, Redcar, Stockton and Whitby.

Strikers had previously rejected bosses' offer of a 75p an hour increase over two years in four instalments.

The deal sees all pay rises backdated to March 2018.

■ **YORKSHIRE BUS** workers are balloting over a "systematic campaign of anti-trade union activities" at their workplaces.

Around 3,500 Unite union employed by First Group are set to vote on whether to strike over bullying management. Two senior Unite reps are set to appeal against their dismissal.

RAILWAYS

Walkouts to derail unsafe driver-only operation plan

RMT UNION members on Northern Rail took their 46th day of strikes against driver-only operation (DOO) trains.

They are demanding bosses guarantee a second safety-critical member of staff on board at all times.

RMT general secretary Mick Cash warned that DOO would not only "lose the protection of a safety critical conductor. They will also have to travel without the protection of any second

person at all," he said. Workers are planning to strike again this Saturday and 9 and 16 February.

■ **THE RMT** transport union said it had "racked up an important victory" after securing 550 cleaning jobs on the London Underground. Outsourcer ABM planned to axe up to 1,000 jobs.

The union pledged to "leave no member behind" in the continuing fight for jobs and pay justice.

MUSEUMS

High stakes for Beefeaters

WORKERS AT three royal palaces are set to strike on Wednesday of next week against attacks on their pensions.

PCS union members at the Tower of London, Kensington Palace and Hampton Court Palace are set to stage four-hour walkouts.

They are set to stage two more walkouts on 16 and 21 February.

Workers include the Beefeater guards at the Tower of London. Bosses at Historic

Royal Palaces want to close workers' defined benefits pension schemes and transfer them to a worse defined contribution one.

PCS members struck against the plans for three hours last month.

Members of the GMB union also struck against the attacks on Tuesday of last week.

PCS and GMB members can defeat the attack if they strike together—with longer strikes that can hit the bosses even harder.

CIVIL SERVICE

Build for a ballot over pay

CIVIL SERVICE workers were set for more meetings this week as part of their PCS union's campaign to smash low pay.

The PCS is gearing up for a potential national ballot for industrial action to end a pay freeze that has lasted more than a decade.

National strikes across the civil service can beat low pay. But PCS activists need to prepare to deliver a strong

result for strikes in a ballot. The consultations are a chance to organise, build and strengthen the union.

● Go to bit.ly/PCSbriefings to find an event near you

■ **RESULTS** OF an election to decide the Left Unity group's candidate for the PCS union's assistant general secretary were announced last week.

Chris Baugh got 181 votes and Stella Dennis got 165.

OBITUARIES

Vince Dawes
1973-2019

COMRADES IN South Wales, Watford and Harrow were very saddened to hear about the sudden death of Vince Dawes last week.

Vince was one of the founder members of Newport Socialist Workers Party in 1992. His unfailing good humour and consistent commitment led to many effective actions during the 1990s, such as a successful anti-fascist demonstration in Newport.

He was the most active member in Newport and other parts of South Wales until he left for college in London in 2001.

After arriving in Watford,



Vince Dawes

Vince was an indefatigable comrade in the local branch throughout the 2000s.

In particular, Vince was very active in the campaign against Bush and Blair's wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

He once joined a brave anti-war protest by a lone schoolboy outside Watford Boys Grammar just because

he was passing on the way to work.

And he defended the protest from a hostile attack in the local paper.

Vince's loss so young has left a big hole in the lives of the very many people who he had touched with his beautiful personality.

We send condolences to his partner Lilia, his family in Wales and all his friends.

The funeral will take place on Friday 15 February and will be followed by a celebration of his life. And comrades in South Wales are planning a memorial meeting.

Jon Gamble and Richard Morse
● Funeral 15 February, 1.20pm at Mortlake Crematorium, Kew Meadow Path, Townmead Road, Richmond, TW9 4EN

EDUCATION

Hundreds on streets against an academy

by JANET SZPAKOWSKI

TRADE UNIONISTS and Labour councillors joined parents, students and teachers at a protest against the threatened academisation of the Barclay school in Stevenage last Saturday.

Hundreds marched through the town, handing out leaflets and chanting, "Hands off Barclay, Down with Nash".

Baron Nash, who co-founded Future Academies, was formerly under-secretary of state for schools until his resignation in 2017.

Jill Borchers, NEU education union representative at the school, said there had been a complete lack of consultation. She added that Future Academy's proposals demonstrated ignorance of the many existing initiatives at the school.

One of the proposed changes to the curriculum is to replace drama with Latin.

At the rally Kiri Tunks brought a message of support from the NEU and spoke of many campaigns across the country.

Simon from the Anti-Academies Alliance said he was particularly impressed with the way in which campaigns were linking up and supporting each other. Kirsty,



A CLEAR message against the academy plan

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

from the John Roan School in Greenwich, spoke of their campaign's success in seeing off the Department for Education's preferred academy trust but said that the fight continues to oppose any new sponsor.

Rick, who was carrying a CWU flag on the march,

said he had visited the picket line at the Galliard primary school in Enfield where he has recently been elected a Labour councillor.

Shaunagh, a parent from the anti-academy campaign at Waltham Holy Cross Primary in Waltham Abbey spoke at the rally and said

there will be a silent protest with parents and pupils outside their school at 3pm on Friday this week.

She also said that the hundreds marching in Stevenage, had encouraged her to plan a demonstration in her area. ●For further news go to **Hands Off Barclay!!!!!!** on Facebook

TEACHERS' PAY IN ENGLAND

Now turn votes into action

GROUPS OF teachers in the NEU union have met to discuss the fight over pay and school funding following an indicative ballot.

The ballot asked whether members were prepared to strike to secure a 3.5 percent pay rise for all teachers, and to demand more money for schools.

Some 84 percent of sixth form college members and 82 percent of members in schools backed strikes.

And teachers unanimously voted in favour of the union continuing to fight funding cuts.

The turnout of 31.4 percent was high compared to other ballots held in the NUT union, now part of the NEU. But it is below the Tories' 50 percent threshold for legal strikes.

It's unclear what the union will do next, but some groups of workers have made clear that they want to fight now.

In Brighton, an NEU general meeting last week voted to strike. Brighton and Hove NEU had the second highest turnout in the indicative ballot, of 56 percent.

Stefan Simms is divisional secretary of the union in

Ealing, west London, which scored the highest turnout of 63 percent. He told Socialist Worker, "In Redbridge and Waltham Forest, NEU members have met and said they want to move to a ballot to secure better pay."

"At the moment they get outer London pay and they already have a campaign running to get inner London pay."

"Some activists are exploring ways to prosecute a London funding and a London weighting campaign in tandem with securing a national ballot over funding and pay."

■ **EDUCATION UNIONS** this week made a submission to the School Teachers' Review Body calling for an "emergency" 5 percent rise for teachers next year.

■ **SCHOOL SUPPORT** staff in England are set to vote on taking action over pay, terms and conditions and workload. Around 250,000 workers represented by the Unison union have until 5 March to vote in a consultative ballot.

HOME CARE

Keep fighting in Birmingham

THE FUTURE of Birmingham's home enablement service hangs in the balance as the city's Labour-run council turns on itself.

Birmingham City Council's cabinet approved the final revised proposals for the home enablement team on 22 January. But two Labour councillors "called in" the council's decision—which means a scrutiny committee will consider the plans.

The scrutiny committee is set to report back on 5 February, and may make it

more difficult for the council to pursue its plans.

Care workers have been fighting for almost two years to save the service from privatisation and cuts.

The low-paid Unison union members struck again last Saturday, and leafletted councillor Paulette Hamilton's ward in the Handsworth area of the city.

Unison general secretary Dave Prentis was due to speak at a solidarity rally on Tuesday night as Socialist Worker went to press.

EIS UNION

Say no to the new offer for Scotland's teachers

SCOTTISH TEACHERS in the EIS union are balloting on a new pay offer, with a recommendation to reject.

In October of last year EIS members voted overwhelmingly to reject a pay offer. This was backed up by a huge demonstration attended by 30,000 people.

The union is campaigning for a one-year 10 percent increase to at least partly redress the 24 percent loss in real earnings over the last ten years.

A ballot for strikes was due to start on Thursday this week, but a late offer was put to the union.

The details were not public as Socialist Worker went to press. But a meeting of the EIS National



On the march last year

Council voted by 47 to 45 to consult members on the new deal with a recommendation to reject.

The press claims the new offer is 12 percent, but this would be over three years. Activists need to campaign to reject the offer and reinstate a strike ballot. **Charlotte Ahmed**

UCU ELECTIONS

Vote Jo McNeill & UCU Left

ELECTIONS IN the UCU union were set to begin on Friday of this week.

The UCU Left, which Socialist Worker supports, is backing Jo McNeill for union vice president.

Jo won 41 percent of the vote when she stood for general secretary in 2017 against incumbent Sally Hunt.

She has stressed the need to "build UCU from below" and to have a fighting leadership in the union.

Activists are encouraging

workers to invite Jo to hustings.

UCU Left is also backing Carlo Morelli for president of the UCU in Scotland.

Left candidates for the union's national executive committee include Paul Anderson, Lesley McGorrigan, Allister Mactaggart, Dave Muritu, Naina Kent, Richard McEwan and Saira Weiner.

Voting ends on 1 March.

●Go to jomcneillucu.wordpress.com and uculeft.org for more details

OPEN UNIVERSITY

UCU UNION members at the Open University (OU) have voted by 94 percent to accept a new permanent contract.

The contract gives more than 4,000 OU lecturers better job security. Previously, lecturers were at risk of losing their jobs if student numbers

dropped on their module. Now redundancy would be a last resort.

The contract also gives workers more leave and paid time off for professional development. The UCU said it also hopes to secure more improvements in the future.

TRAFFIC WARDENS

>>>continued from page 20 for 19 days last year.

Traffic warden David told Socialist Worker that bosses "aren't committed to resolving" the dispute.

He said strikers were offered a "bogus offer" of just 1p extra an hour.

"There's nothing new from NSL, no news, no information. I thought by now we would have a call from them to say 'let's come and discuss the issues,'" he said.

Many workers have been traffic wardens in Camden for over a decade, and are frustrated at poor treatment at the hands of bosses.

"People have been in the job, 10, 15 or 20 years", said David.

"They have annual leave of just 20 days. Workers



are out in all conditions, and in busy streets.

"We face all weather conditions—it's not fair and it's not good enough."

Despite intransigence from NSL bosses, David said workers are "very enthusiastic".

COLLEGE STRIKE FOR BETTER PAY

by SADIE ROBINSON

WORKERS AT 12 colleges across England began a two-day strike on Tuesday to demand more pay.

UCU union members at a 13th college, Kendal, were set to join the strike on Wednesday.

The action is the second wave of strikes in the pay battle after UCU members at six colleges struck in November.

Workers have rejected a below-inflation 1 percent pay deal after pay has dropped in real terms by 25 percent over the last decade.

At Lambeth College in south London, singing strikers did the conga on the picket line.

Mandy Brown is UCU branch secretary at the college. She told Socialist Worker, "The idea of building up momentum with waves of strikes is working."

"We've had about a 15 percent rise in membership since the strike in November."

"People joined because they want to strike over pay."



STRIKING A militant pose at Lambeth College

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Steve joined the UCU the week before November's strike so he could take part.

"I'm glad I joined—I've got no regrets," he said.

"I've been leaving flyers out about the union and more people have joined in my department now. I'm more than optimistic about

this. For me it's not a matter of if, but when we win."

Workers are demanding a 5 percent rise.

They know that years of real terms pay cuts reflect the low value the Tories put on further education (FE).

In Bradford strikers held lively, solid picket lines.

Branch Secretary Geraint Evans said no classes took place. RMT union members from Leeds joined the picket in solidarity.

In Leicester the Labour MP for Leicester South Jon Ashworth joined the picket line.

Jo McNeill, UCU Left

candidate for UCU Vice President, joined Lambeth pickets.

"I wouldn't be where I am now without FE," she told Socialist Worker.

"I went back into education as a mature student so FE is very close to my heart."

The money's there to pay workers. A deal reached last year at the Capital City College Group (CCCG), which includes three colleges, gave 1,700 workers a 5 percent rise. It followed eight days of strikes.

Money

Jo said, "The CCCG win shows that colleges do have money and can pay fair pay. Now we need all these other colleges to do the same."

The threat of the strikes has already pushed some college bosses into making concessions.

Planned action at Hugh Baird College was suspended after a deal was reached.

It gives workers pay rises of between 3 and 6 percent over two years, and an extra five days' annual leave.

The union also suspended strikes at Coventry College as

talks continue. And strikes at New College Swindon were suspended after the union said it reached a deal that would give "significant pay rises".

But a three-day strike starting on 20 March—the next wave of action in the campaign—remains on at the college.

Mandy said, "We hope to be out again for the next wave of strikes if the college still refuses to budge."

"A previous strike got us a 1 percent rise—which isn't enough but it shows that strikes work."

"The strike is having more impact in the college because people in more departments and support services have joined. We're feeling confident—it's exciting."

The colleges on strike on Tuesday and Wednesday are Abingdon and Witney, Bath, Bradford, Bridgwater and Taunton, City of Wolverhampton, Croydon, East Sussex, Harlow, Lambeth, Petroc in Devon, New College Swindon and West Thames College. UCU members at Kendal College plan a further strike on 12 February, while those at Leicester College were set to strike again on Thursday of this week

Thanks to Barry Pavier

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Traffic wardens' solid strikes give warning tickets to council outsourcers

by TOMÁŠ TENGEŁY-EVANS and SARAH BATES

TRAFFIC WARDENS in south London are taking the fight for sick pay to outsourcing giant NSL.

GMB union members in the Tory-run borough of Wandsworth began a 48-hour strike last Thursday—and planned a further two-day walkout from this Thursday.

And traffic wardens in Camden, north London, are planning to strike for 14 days from next Monday.

Workers in Wandsworth are furious that bosses make them work in harsh

weather conditions then penalise them if they fall ill. GMB member Ralph told Socialist Worker, "You'll be outside working for eight hours."

"You can only seek shelter when it's raining and imagine being out that long in cold temperatures like there are now."

"We see being out in all

conditions as part



A striker in Wandsworth

and parcel of the job.

"But when the people sitting in the office drinking their hot coffee get sick pay and we don't then that's wrong."

Many workers complained that bosses don't provide them with proper equipment. Ralph said, "We don't have adequate uniforms to keep us warm, even in this weather we don't have proper jumpers."

A big

issue is the Bradford Factor—a management tool that monitors workers' "unplanned absences". Eddie, a GMB member, told Socialist Worker, "It shouldn't be used to penalise people who are genuinely sick."

"I was beginning to feel really rough one day. I thought, I've got an exemplary work record so it's alright if I go home."

"I came back the next day and had to have a back to work interview and the letters you get are very intimidatory."

Pickets said that bosses' attitude had an impact on some workers. But

lively picket lines, with solidarity from other trade unionists, can help win the arguments.

As GMB member James said, "When they see the strike it could give them confidence to say 'I'm going to strike too'."

Immense

Councils in London make £1 million a day in profits from parking fines, which gives workers immense power to hit bosses. As Ralph said, "Why are rich people rich? Because they're tight and it's us poor people who make them rich."

"But many small axes

can chop down a big tree. And that's what we can do—hit them where it hurts in the pocket and reputation."

Every trade unionist should build solidarity for the traffic wardens' fight.

In Camden, traffic wardens were also preparing a return to the picket lines.

The 120 Unison union members in the north London borough were due to start a 14-day strike from 4 February.

They're fighting for an hourly rate of £11.15 from outsourcer NSL, and struck

>>>continued on page 19